

MARVEL

THE IMMORTAL IRON FIST[®]

THE MORTAL
IRON FIST

SWIERCZYNSKI • FOREMAN • HEATH • CAMUNCOLI

THE IMMORTAL IRON FIST

THE MORTAL IRON FIST



THE IMMORTAL IRON FIST



THE MORTAL IRON FIST

Writer: Duane Swierczynski

Artists: Travel Foreman & Russ Heath (Past Sequences)

Color Art: Matt Milla with Matt Hollingsworth (#20)

"ORSON RANDALL AND THE DEATH QUEEN OF CALIFORNIA"

Artist: Giuseppe Camuncoli

Color Art: Paul Mounts

Letterers: Artmonkeys Studios

Assistant Editor: Alejandro Arbona

Editor: Warren Simons

Collection Editor: Cory Levine

Editorial Assistant: Alex Starbuck

Assistant Editor: John Denning

Editors, Special Projects: Jennifer Grünwald & Mark D. Beazley Senior

Editor, Special Projects: Jeff Youngquist

Senior Vice President of Sales: David Gabriel

Production: Jerron Quality Color & Jerry Kalinowski

Digital Manager/Production: Tim Smith 3

Digital Production: Annie Cheng & Jackeline Tejada

Editor in Chief: C.B. Cebulski

Chief Creative Officer: Joe Quesada

President: Dan Buckley

Executive Producer: Alan Fine

© 2018 Marvel Characters, Inc. All rights reserved. All characters featured in this issue and the distinctive names and likenesses thereof, and all related indicia are trademarks of Marvel Characters, Inc. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. WWW.MARVEL.COM

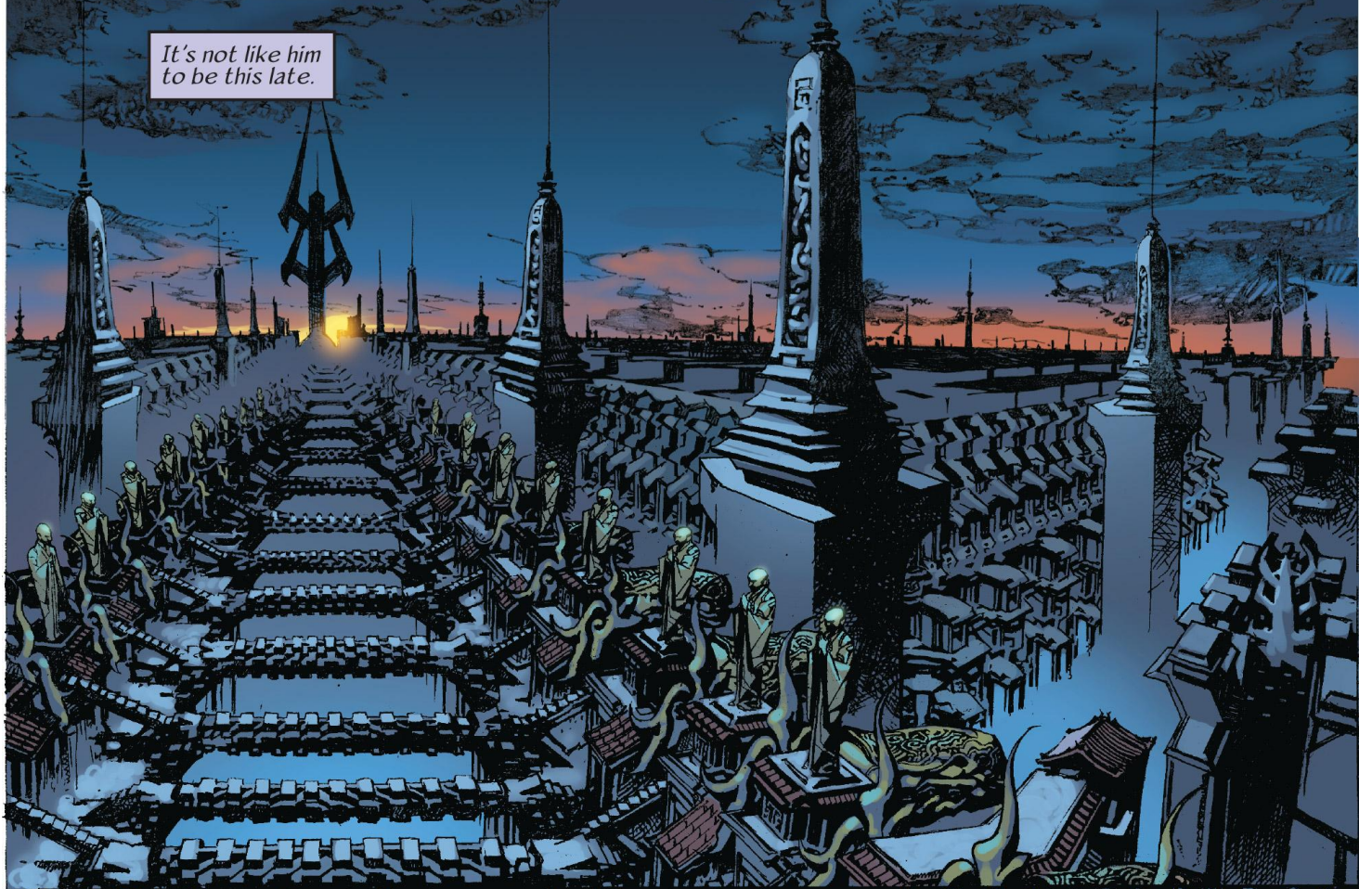
鐵拳 17



The mystical city of K'un-Lun.

10 years from now.

It's not like him
to be this late.



Today, of
all days.



But he vanished
before the sun
came up.



Where's
he *been*?





I NEED
TO HEAR IT
FROM YOU.



GOOD LORD,
WHAT'VE YOU
BEEN DOING,
CHILD?



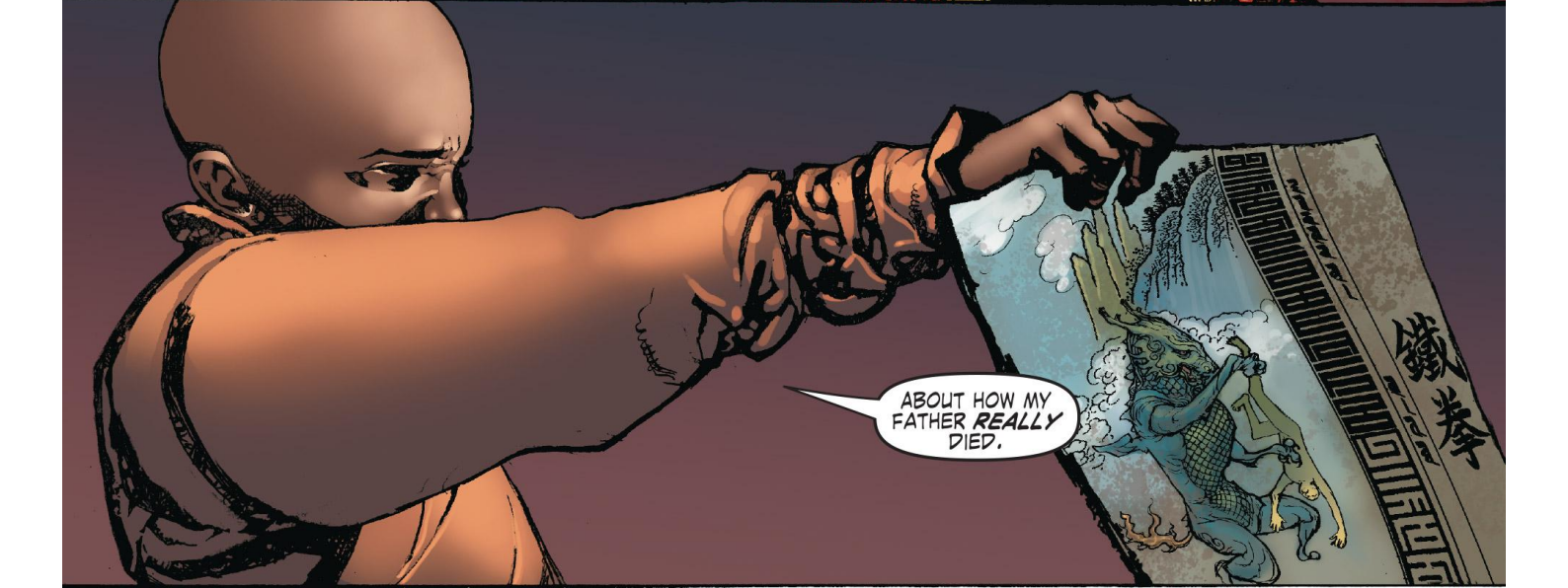
YOU DON'T DO
THAT TO SOMEONE.
JUST **DISAPPEAR**
LIKE THAT.

YOU NEED
TO TELL ME
THE TRUTH.

But in that
moment, I knew
exactly how
he'd spent his
ninth birthday.



ABOUT
WHAT?



ABOUT HOW MY
FATHER **REALLY**
DIED.

New York City.

Now.

YOU GOTTA TALK
TO HER STRAIGHT.
DON'T BE DANCIN'
AROUND IT.

YEAH,
RIGHT. THE *DIRECT*
APPROACH.

EXACTLY.

YOU KNOW
WHAT THE
DIRECT APPROACH
GETS YOU,
LUKE?

KNOCKED ON YOUR
ASS.

GOT
THAT RIGHT,
SON.

SO THIS IS WHY
WE'RE OUT HERE?

JUST SO YOU CAN AVOID HAVING A REAL
TALK WITH YO' GIRLFRIEND?

WHAK

POP
POP
POP
POP
POP
POP

NO.

WE'RE
SUPPOSED TO BE
DOING SOME COMMUNITY
OUTREACH, AREN'T WE?

RIIIIGHT.



YO,
BUDDY YOU
OKAY?

(M-M-MUST
HAVE TAKEN A WRONG
TURN. SO FOOLISH
OF ME.)



(HEY, IT'S
OKAY.)

(DO YOU
NEED AN AMBULANCE?
WE CAN'T REALLY STICK
AROUND, BEING KIND OF
OUTLAWS AND ALL,
BUT...)



(NO. I AM
FINE. THANK
YOU.)

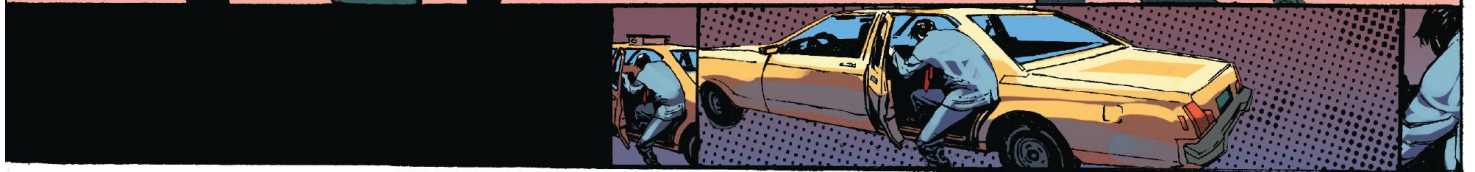
(SO
KIND OF
YOU.)

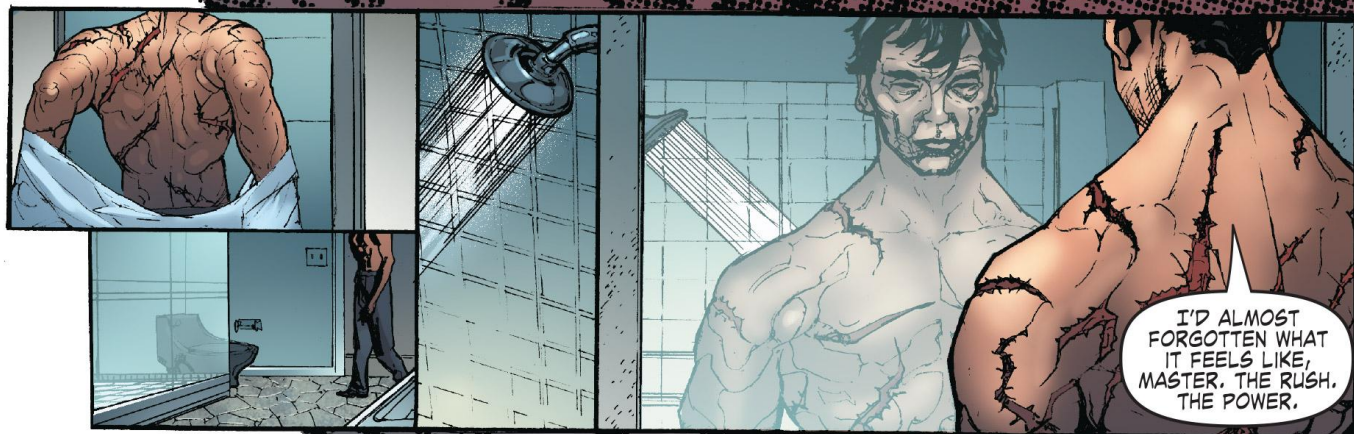
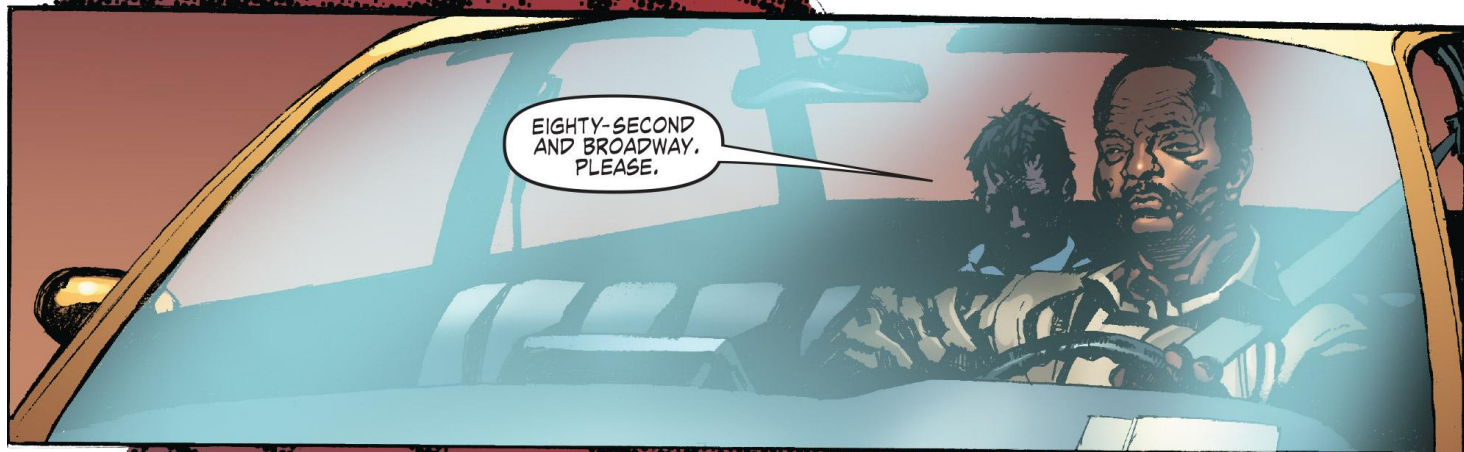
ALL THESE
YEARS, YOU THINK I
WOULDA PICKED UP
SOME CHINESE.

HE SAYS
HE THINKS YOU'RE A
VERY ATTRACTIVE
MAN.

YOU GONNA
CALL MISTY NOW? OR YOU
GONNA GO BUST IN A FEW
MORE HEADS, WORK UP
THE NERVE?

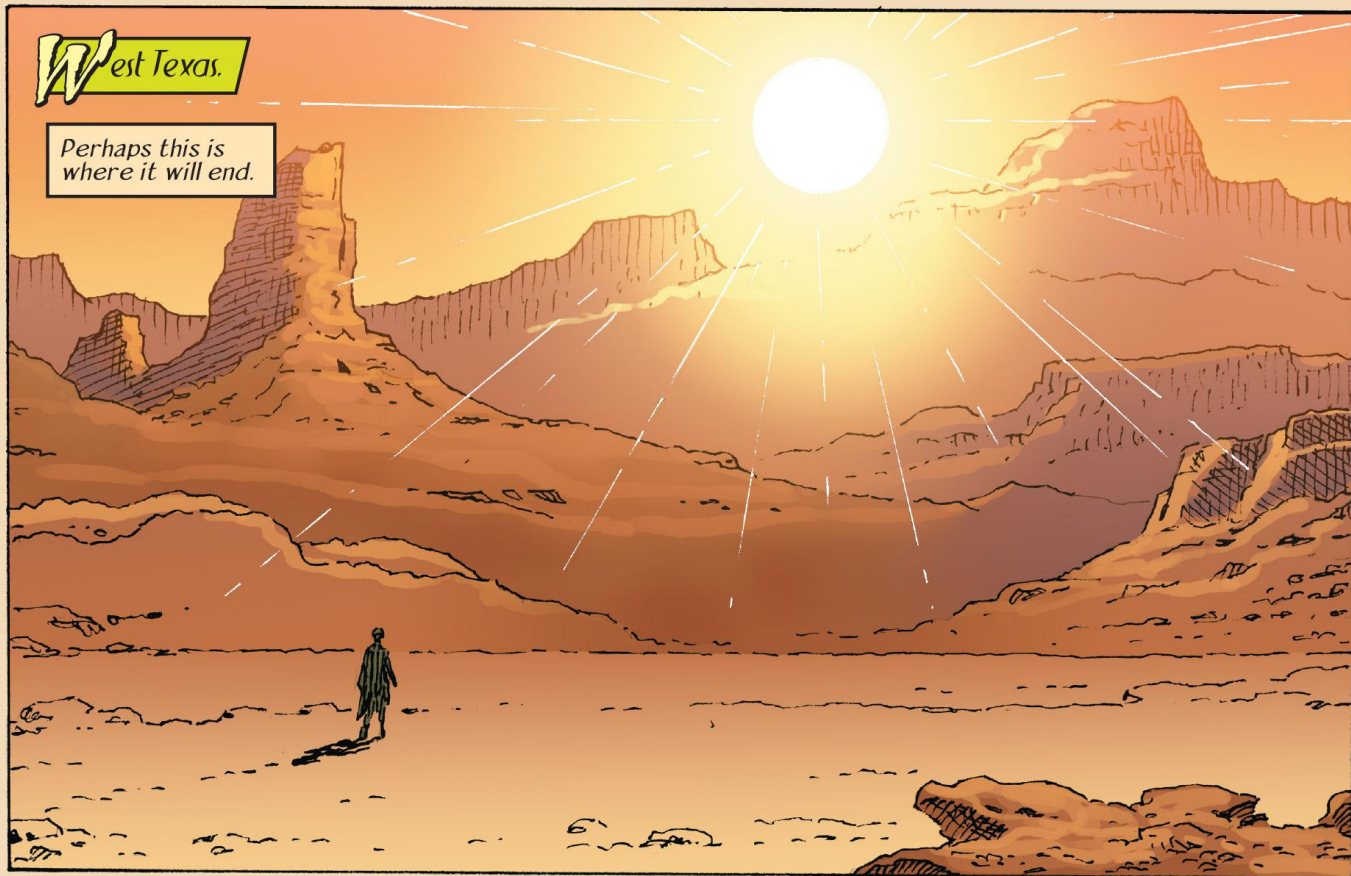
"RUN
OPTION 'B'
BY ME
AGAIN?"





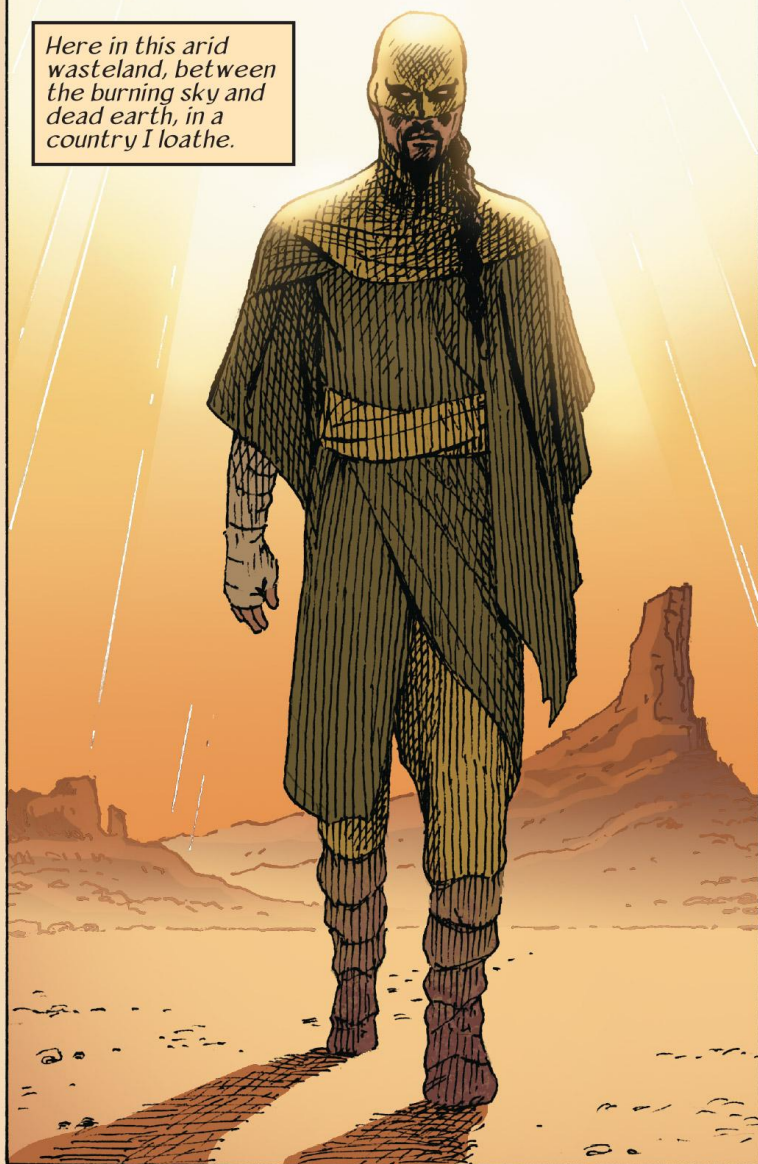
West Texas.

Perhaps this is
where it will end.



Kwai Jun-Fan. Iron Fist, c. 1878 A.D.

Here in this arid
wasteland, between
the burning sky and
dead earth, in a
country I loathe.



And now, after
200 miles...





...another town of filth and disease and poison and violence, populated by those who would exploit my people.



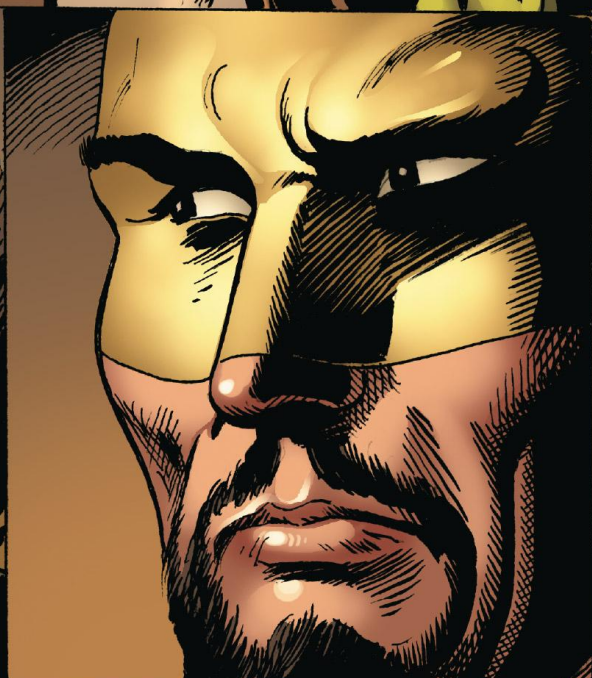
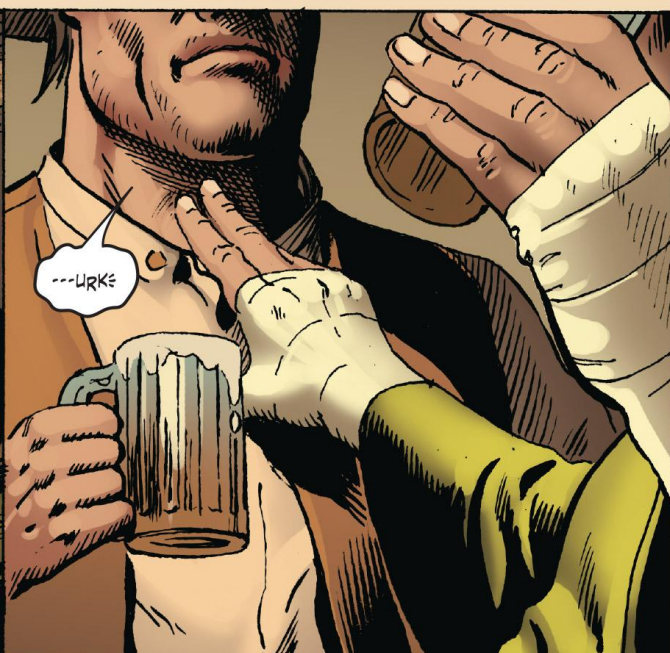
But I am in dire need of water, food, and rest.

I can endure a little filth.



WATER, PLEASE.

COMIN' UP.



*N*anny Rand's apartment. Today.

Happy birthday to me.

I was raised in K'un-Lun, where birthdays didn't mean much.

A child's birthday was never celebrated. The parties were reserved for those who made it to 60, 70 or even 80.

Which is nice, if you expect to **live past 33**.

CLICK

But I am the **Immortal Iron Fist**.

And despite the title, I just found out that only one previous Iron Fist has lived past his or her 33rd birthday.

For those keeping score at home, that's one out of 66.

So...yeah. Not exactly in a **celebratory** mood right now.



Which is lame of me, because my apartment is full of my closest friends and colleagues.

GOOD CAKE. TALK TO MISTY YET?

Luke Cage, my best friend.



I KNOW THIS IS A BAD TIME TO BRING THIS UP, DANNY. AND I KNOW I'M RETIRED. BUT I'VE NOTICED A FEW **IRREGULARITIES** IN...

Jeryn Hogarth, my former colleague.



SHE'S RIGHT OVER THERE.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, DANNY.

Colleen Wing, my good friend.



THESE PLATES ARE SO SLIPPERY!

Gilda Hogarth, Jeryn's mom.



...NO, I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT YOUR AVENGERS, UM, **LINE ITEM** IN YOUR PERSONAL ACCOUNT. THIS IS SOMETHING ELSE ENTIRELY. IF YOU HAVE A FEW MINUTES AFTER EVERYONE LEAVES, WE CAN...

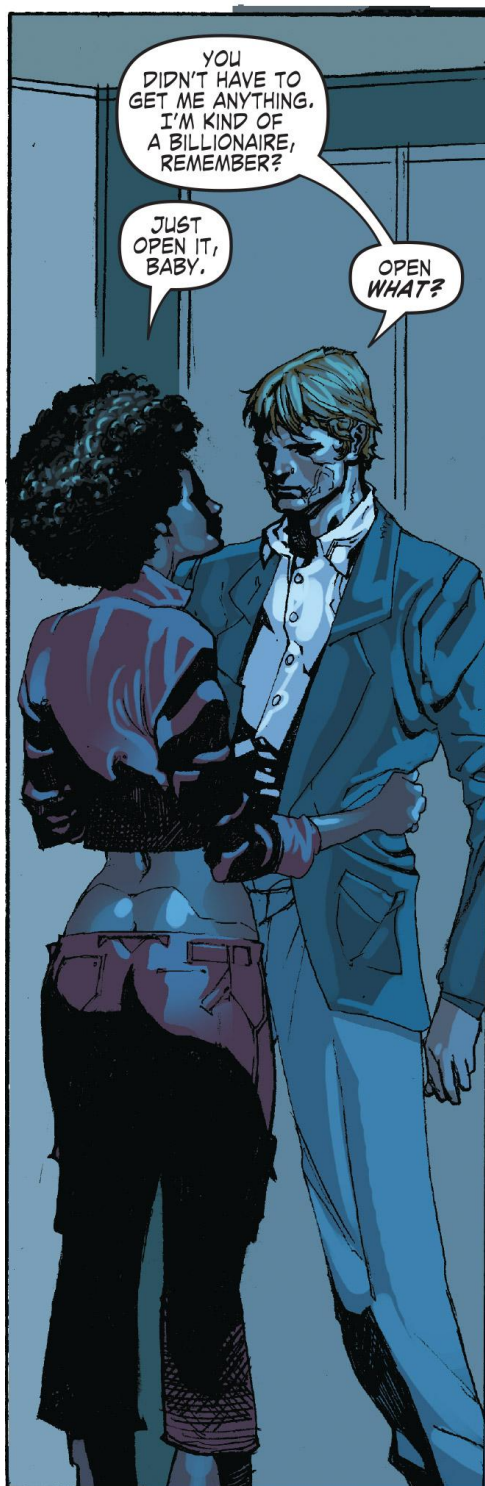


HEY.

Misty Knight, my...girlfriend?



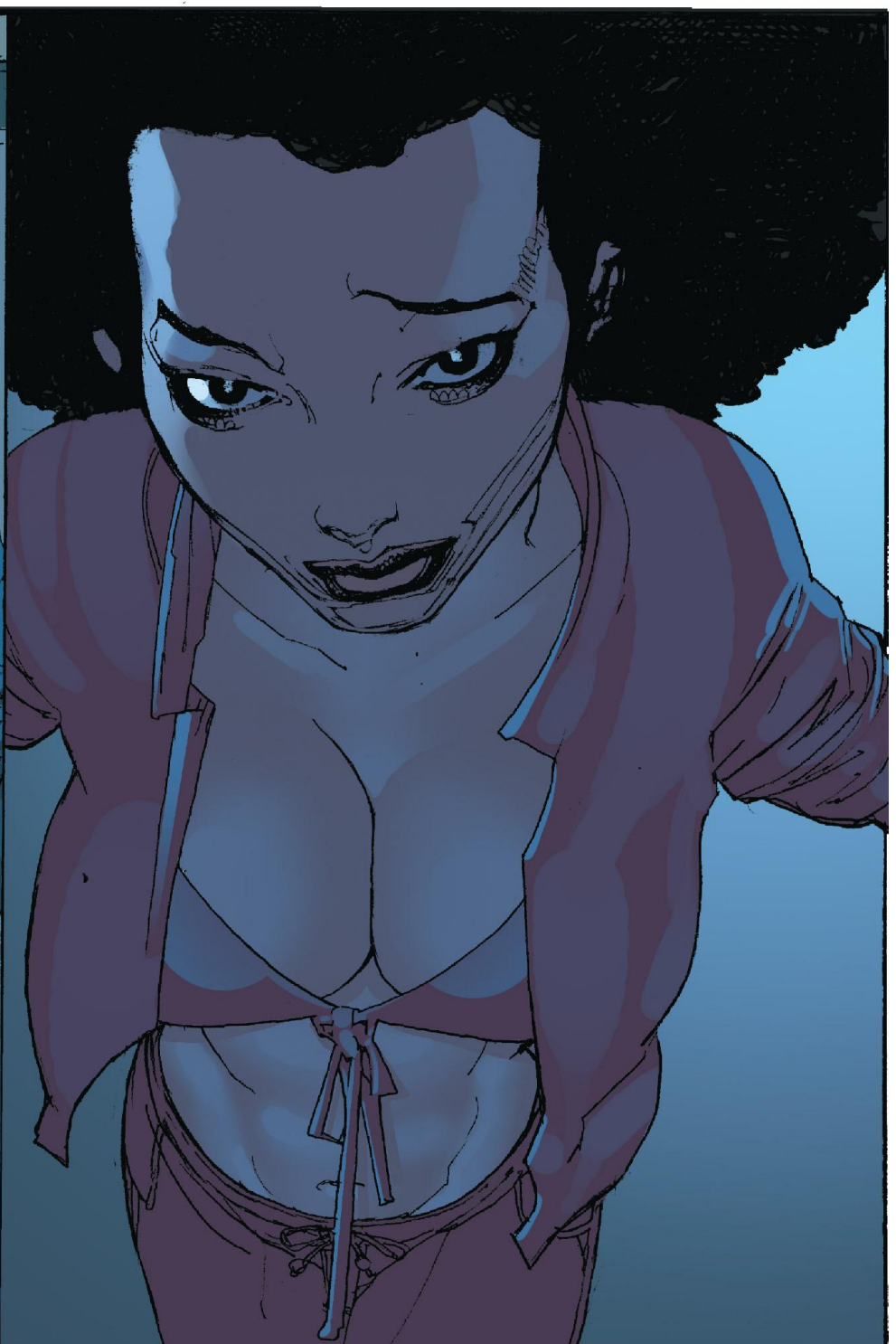
COME ON. GOT A PRESENT FOR YOU, OLD MAN.



YOU
DIDN'T HAVE TO
GET ME ANYTHING.
I'M KIND OF
A BILLIONAIRE,
REMEMBER?

JUST
OPEN IT,
BABY.

OPEN
WHAT?



WAIT, WAIT.
I CAN'T DO
THIS.

YOU'VE
DONE IT JUST
FINE BEFORE,
SUGAR.

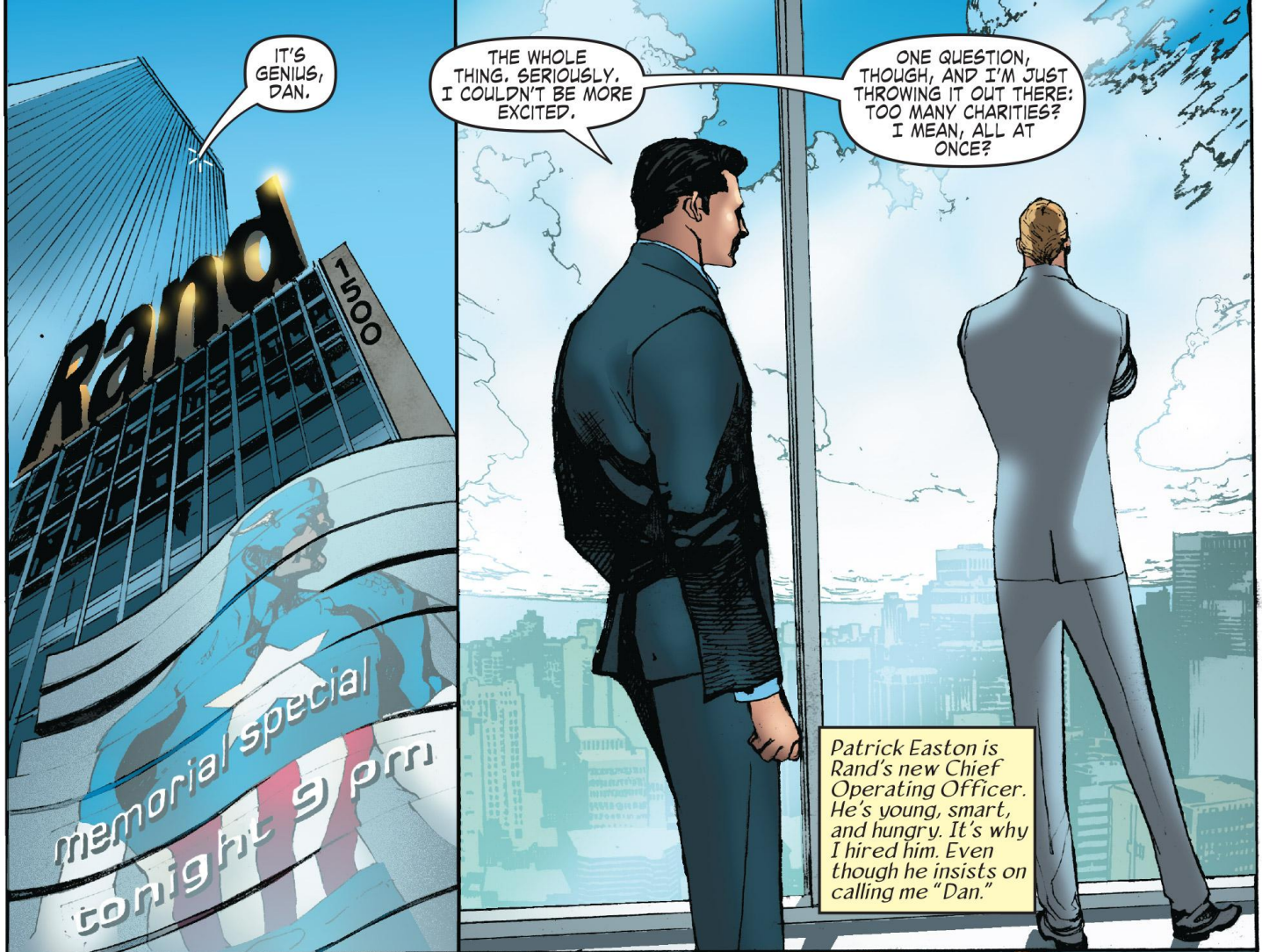
THAT'S
NOT WHAT
I MEAN.
I CAN'T GO
**BACK AND
FORTH** LIKE
THIS.



ARE WE
TOGETHER,
OR WHAT?



I DON'T
KNOW, DANNY...
WHAT'D YOU
WISH FOR?

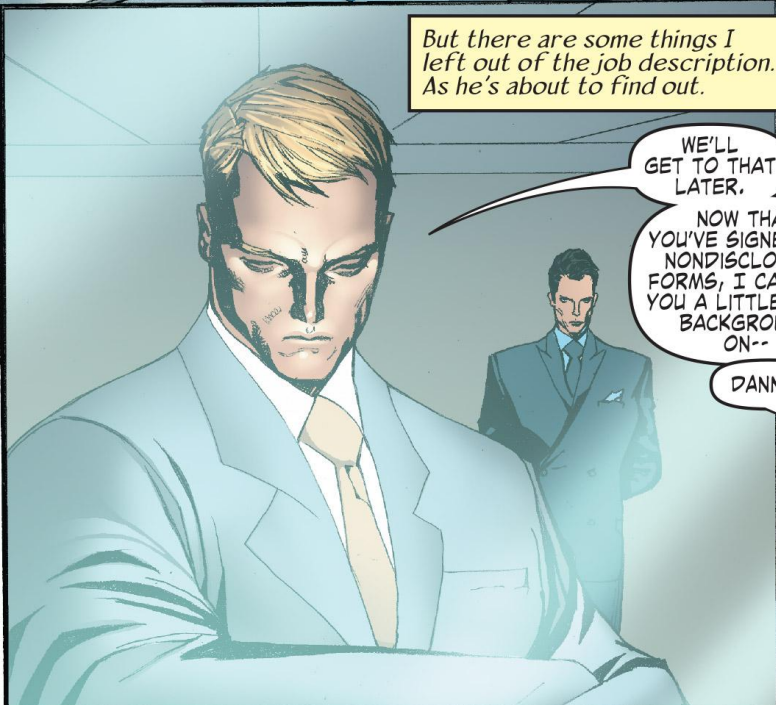


IT'S
GENIUS,
DAN.

THE WHOLE
THING. SERIOUSLY.
I COULDN'T BE MORE
EXCITED.

ONE QUESTION,
THOUGH, AND I'M JUST
THROWING IT OUT THERE:
TOO MANY CHARITIES?
I MEAN, ALL AT
ONCE?

*Patrick Easton is
Rand's new Chief
Operating Officer.
He's young, smart,
and hungry. It's why
I hired him. Even
though he insists on
calling me "Dan."*



*But there are some things I
left out of the job description.
As he's about to find out.*

WE'LL
GET TO THAT
LATER.

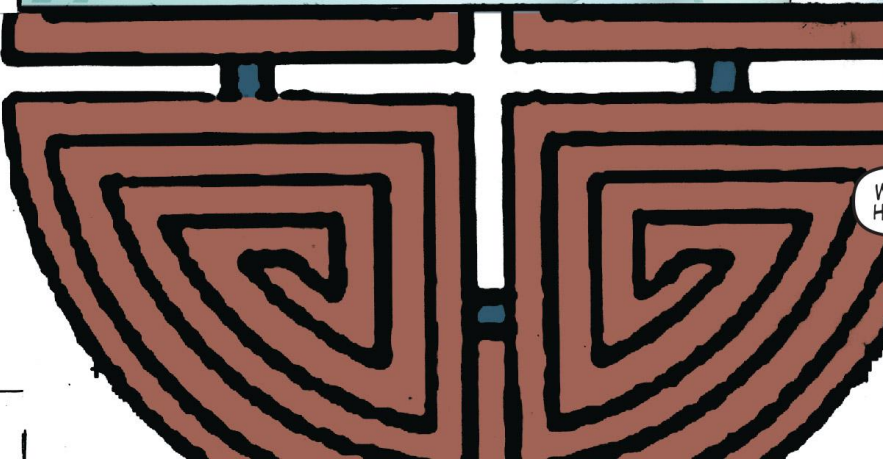
NOW THAT
YOU'VE SIGNED THE
NONDISCLOSURE
FORMS, I CAN GIVE
YOU A LITTLE MORE
BACKGROUND
ON--

DANNY?



HE'S
HERE--MAIN
CONFERENCE
ROOM.

THANKS,
NADINE.



WHO'S
HERE?



AS I STARTED TO SAY, I WANTED TO EXPLAIN A BIT MORE ABOUT MYSELF, AND THE EXTENDED RAND FAMILY.

PATRICK, YOU REMEMBER JERYN.

IF WHAT YOU SAY IS TRUE, JERYN--THAT YOU'VE ALREADY SPOTTED SOME *IRREGULARITIES* IN OUR BOOKS-- I CAN'T HELP BUT WONDER IF IT'S SOMETHING BEYOND THE USUAL FORCES OF CAPITALISM.

JERYN HERE WAS KIDNAPPED BY A DEATH CULT WHO WANTED TO DESTROY THIS COMPANY AND BLOW UP A MYSTICAL CITY HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS OF TIBET.

I'VE GOT ENEMIES. WEIRD ONES.

NOT SURE I FOLLOW YOU, DAN.

AND EVEN THOUGH THEIR LEADER WAS RECENTLY... UH, DOWNSIZED, I THINK THERE'S A CELL SOMEWHERE GUNNING FOR US. PERHAPS EVEN *WITHIN* THE COMPANY.

THIS IS--

I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE INTO LUCHA LIBRE.

NO, THIS IS THE MASK OF A HYDRA SOLD--

I KNOW. I READ THE *TIMES*. THOUGH I'D FEEL A LITTLE BETTER IF YOU TOLD ME AL QAEDA WAS COMING AFTER RAND.

I BROUGHT JERYN IN BECAUSE HE HAS UNIQUE EXPERIENCE WITH THESE GUYS. HE CAN HELP YOU LOOK FOR DETAILS OTHERS MIGHT OVERLOOK.

YOUR MOTHER STILL... UM, WITH US, MR. EASTON?



I am the
Immortal
Iron Fist.

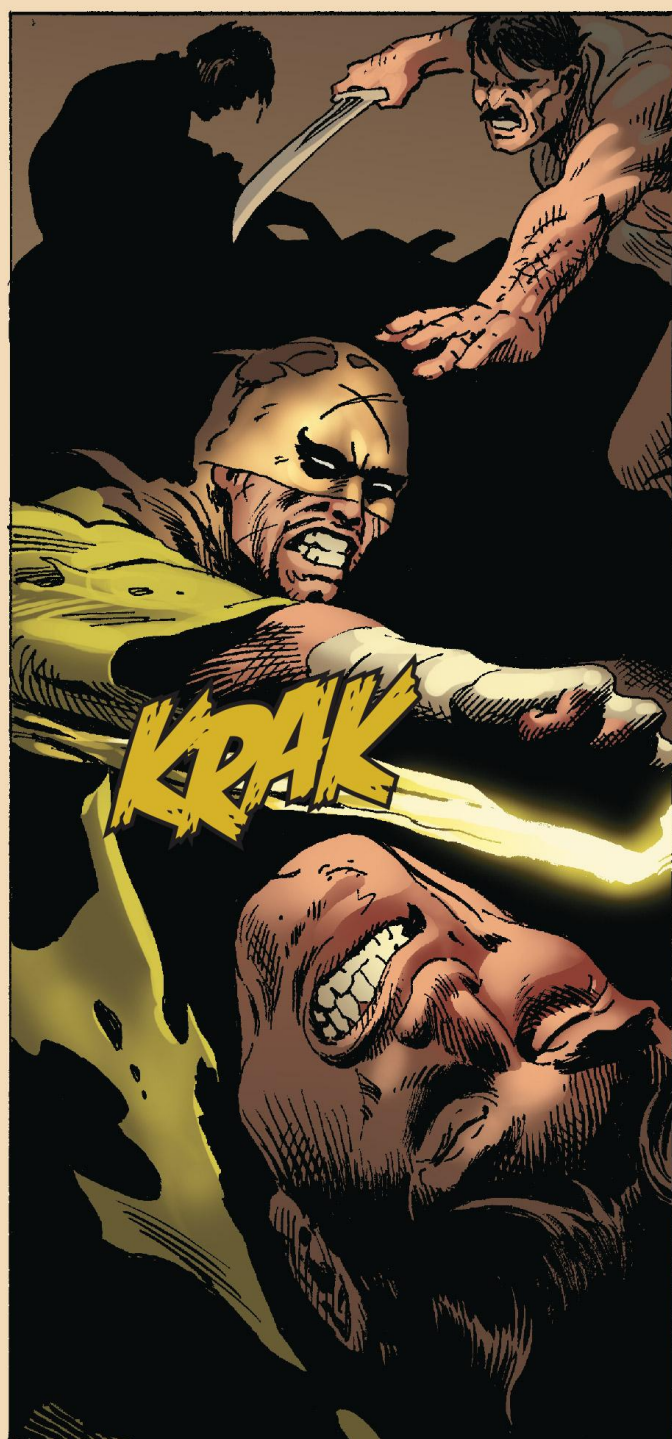
THWOK



I have traveled this country
of violence to aid my
brothers, even as they labor
to lay the rails that will spread
evil from ocean to ocean.



I have fed
the hungry.
Given aid to
the wounded.



KRAK



Times Square.

I've been waiting on this island for 75 years because it was prophesied that a second Outworlder would emerge from K'un-Lun with the chi of Shou-Lao the Undying.

He would call this home, and inherit an empire.

Indeed you have, Mr. Rand.

I've watched you expand it.

As if each building you added could keep you safe.

But there is no running from my master--the undying Ch'i-Lin.

(THIS WON'T TAKE LONG, MASTER.)

(THIS ONE IS WEAK.)

What a week.

People in this city pay thousands of bucks to sit in a room and talk to a guy who hardly says a word.

If that works for them, great.

But all I need is the sidewalk.

There's no better way to sort out your problems than walking the streets of Manhattan.

Somehow, the bustling crowds give you a privacy you can't get anywhere else.

You're knee-deep in the world, and yet out of it at the same time.

Of course, with what's on my mind, I might end up needing to walk all the way to the Bronx.





This guy looks familiar...



It's like he can anticipate my every move...



Sensing openings I didn't even know I was giving him--

Enough. Got to take this guy...



UGH!



OKAY THEN.





The MORTAL IRON FIST

Chapter One



鐵拳 18

鐵拳 18



West Texas.





The beast reveals itself, and all at once I realize what has finally come to **kill** me.



And that this might actually be my time to die.



I had hoped it to be merely **legend**.

Or that if it were real, it would not find me half-way around the world in this cursed country.



But no.

My location doesn't matter.



UNNH!

It is drawn to my **chi**, no matter where I might hide.



It **craves** it, and will accept nothing else.

YEEEEEE-AH!



Die standing.
With *honor*.



MASTER!
CLAIM YOUR
PRIZE!

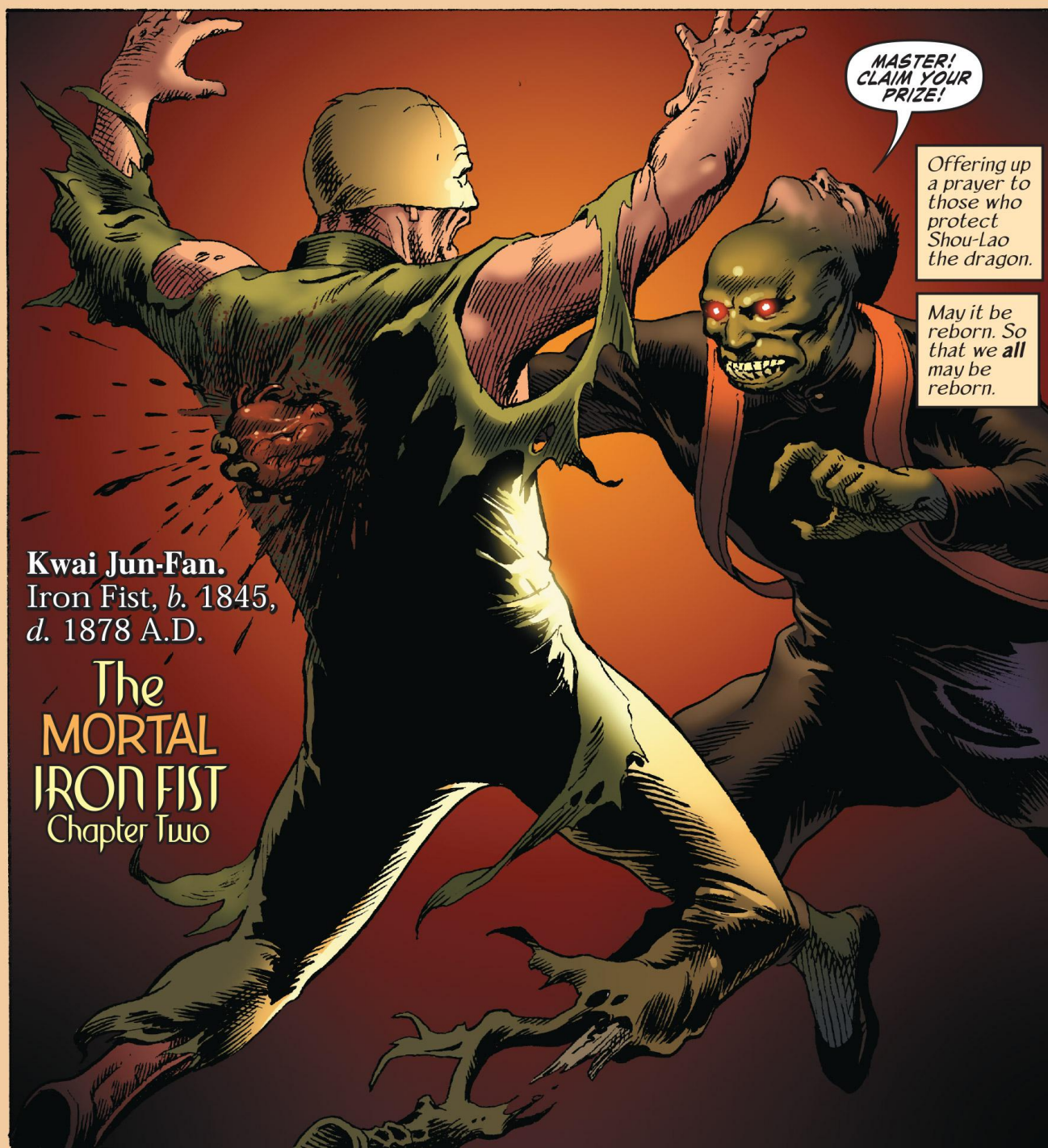
Offering up
a prayer to
those who
protect
Shou-Lao
the dragon.

May it be
reborn. So
that we *all*
may be
reborn.

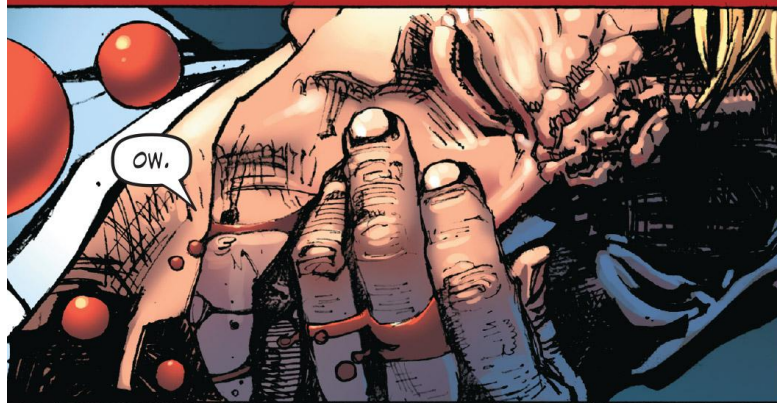
Kwai Jun-Fan.
Iron Fist, b. 1845,
d. 1878 A.D.

The MORTAL IRON FIST

Chapter Two



Central Park. Now.



OW.



Yesterday was my 33rd birthday.

Every other Iron Fist has died, or vanished at age...wait for it...33.

Today, this guy pounces on me from out of nowhere, tells me it's my time to die.



Gotta be coincidence, right?

THERE SOMETHING YOU WANT?

ONLY YOUR HEART, MR. RAND.



NOT ON A FIRST DATE, BUDDY.

HEH.



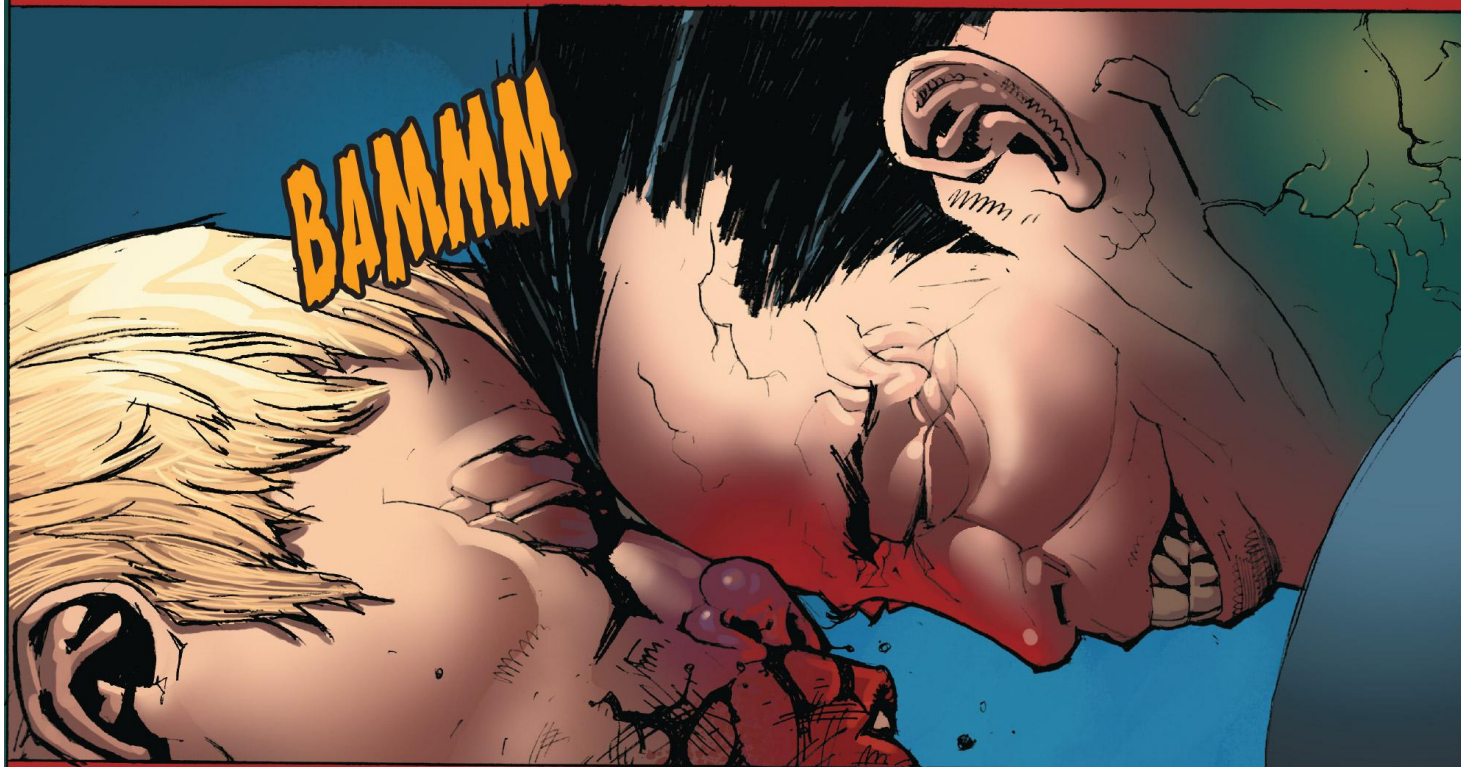
YOUR PREDECESSOR JOKED, TOO.



FWAP



PERHAPS YOU TWO CAN SHARE A JOKE WHEN YOU JOIN HIM IN A MOMENT.



OH HHHH...

I WAS
STUDYING YOU
BEFORE YOU WERE
EVEN BORN, MR.
RAND.

BEFORE
YOUR FATHER
WAS BORN.

BEFORE YOUR
PREDECESSORS
CLAWED, BLIND AND
STARVING, AT THEIR
MOTHERS' TEATS.

OH.
TEATS.
OKAY.

SO YOU
PROBABLY KNEW
I WAS GOING
TO DO--

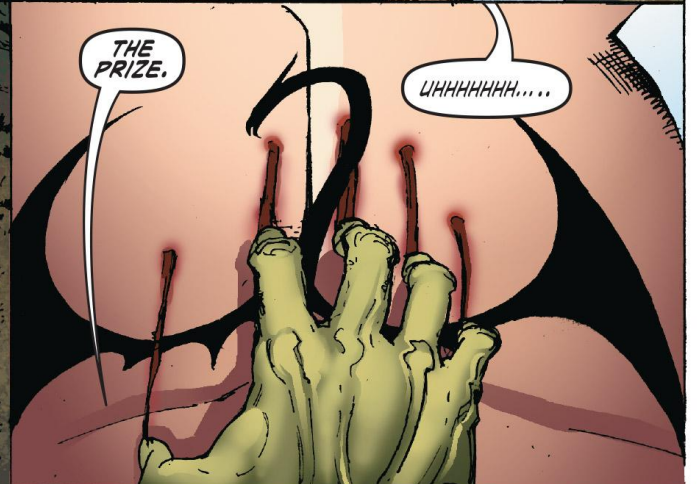
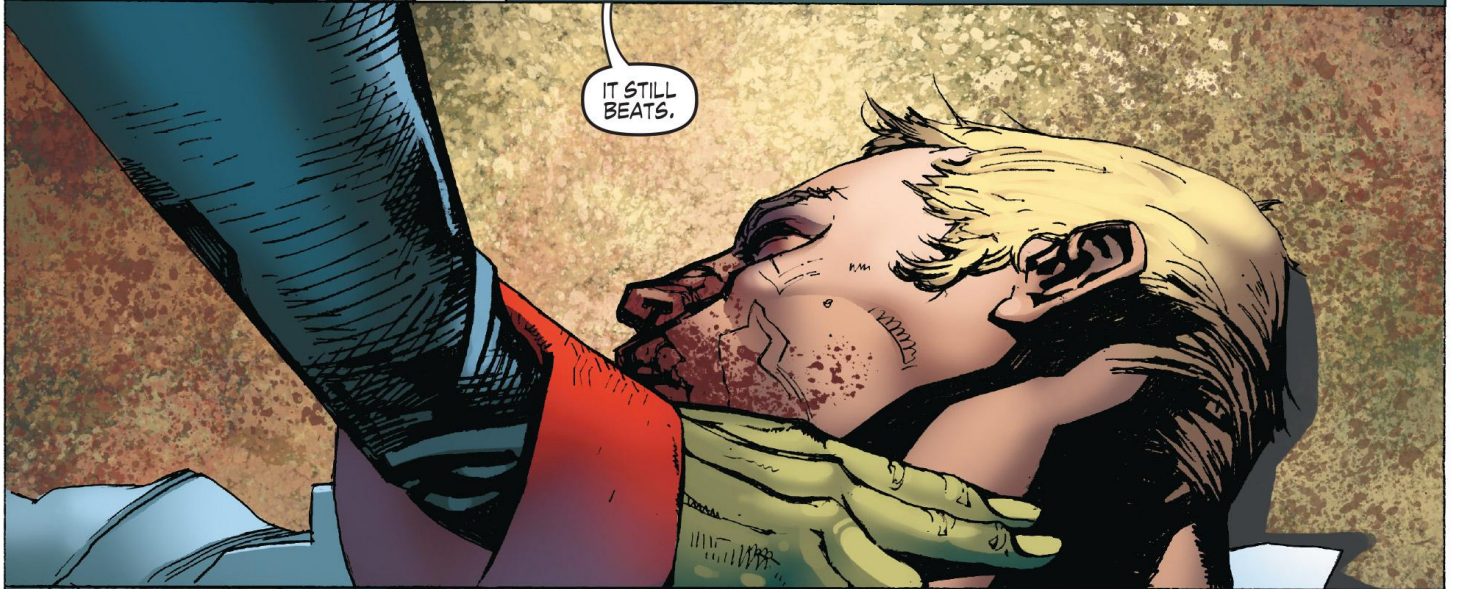
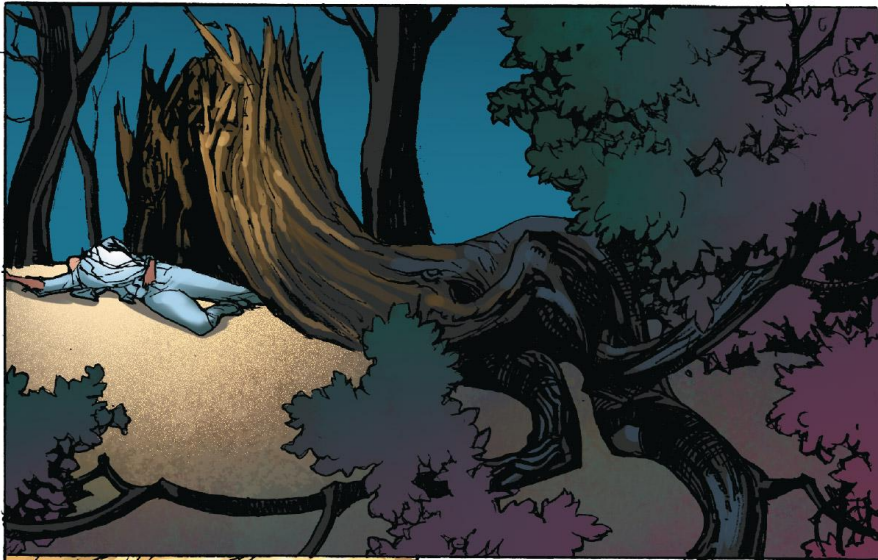


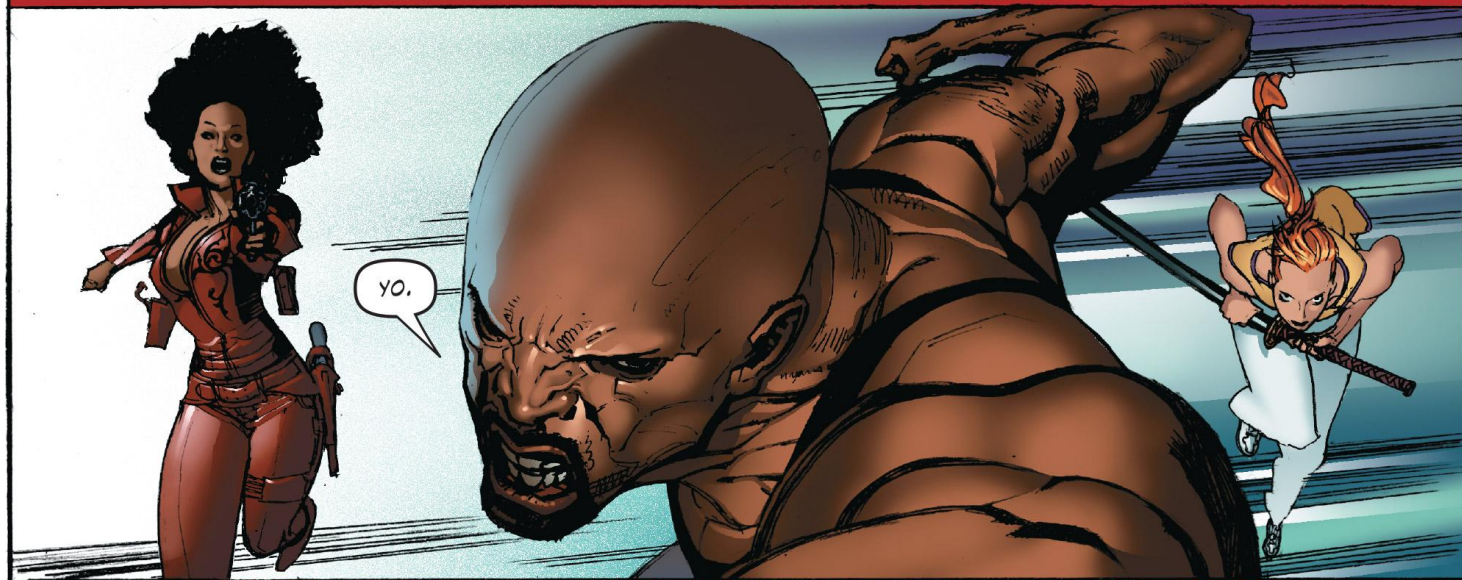
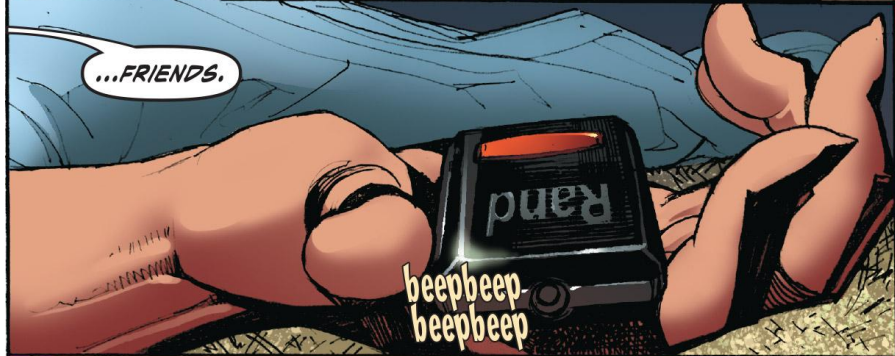
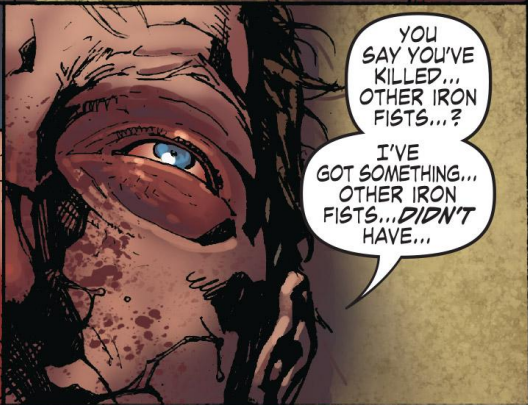
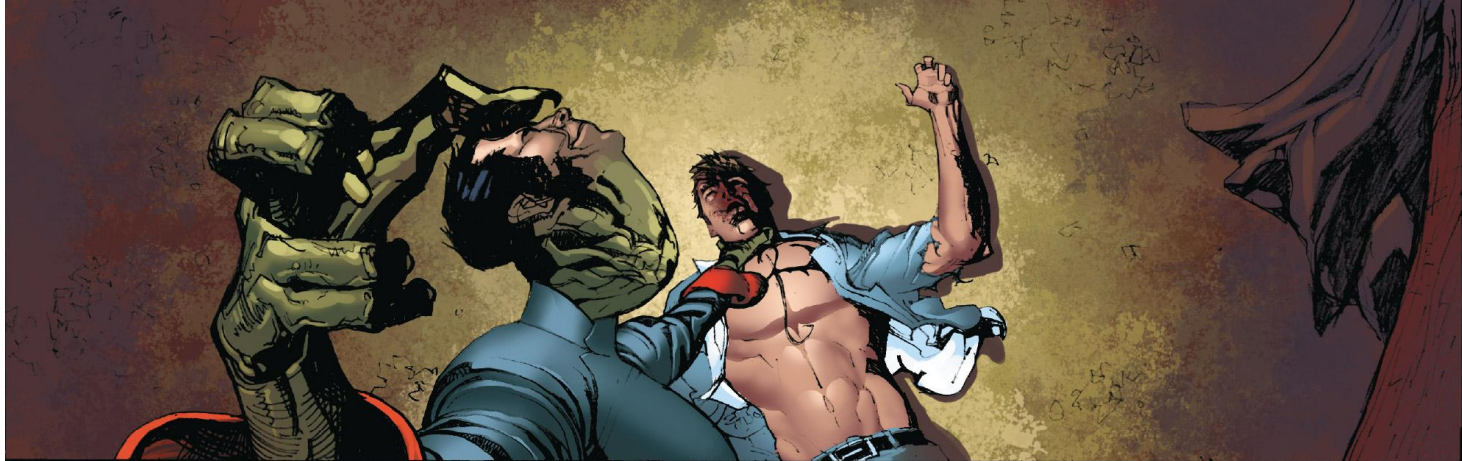
He clips the wings from my **Screaming Eagle Slap**.

Blunts my **Gouge of the Forlorn**.

He even sees my **Bronx Sucker Punch** coming.













MERELY
A *DELAY*,
MASTER.



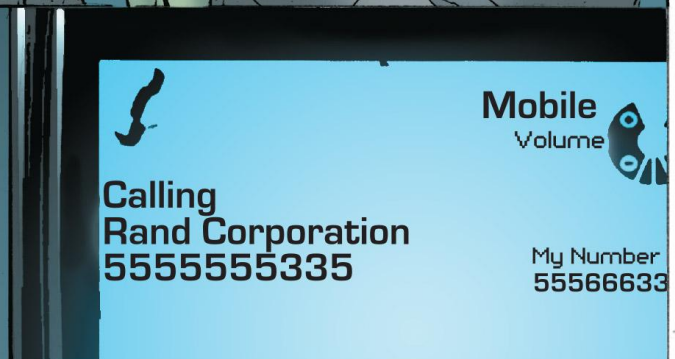
THIS IRON FIST
HOPES TO *CHEAT* HIS
DESTINY, JUST LIKE
HIS OUTWORLDER
PREDECESSOR.



I'VE HAD
75 YEARS TO
THINK ABOUT HOW
TO PREVENT
THAT.
THERE WILL BE
NO HIDING. HE WILL
FACE US, AND HE
WILL YIELD.
I HAVE MADE CERTAIN
ARRANGEMENTS.



DANIEL RAND
MAY HAVE FRIENDS.
BUT SO DO I.



Mobile
Volume
Calling
Rand Corporation
5555555335
My Number
555666633



HELLO, DANIEL
RAND'S OFFICE. HOW
MAY I DIRECT
YOUR CALL?

YES,
EXTENSION 421,
PLEASE.

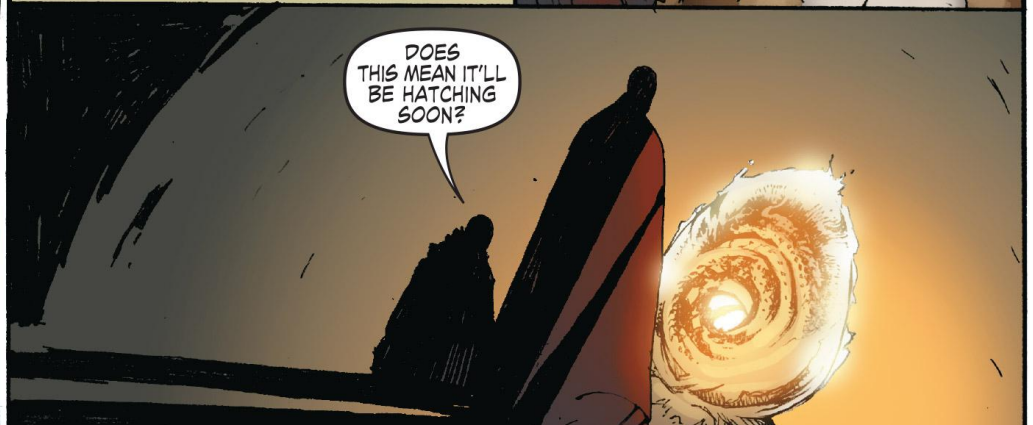
ONE
MOMENT,
PLEASE.



HI,
IT'S ME.
IS HE
BACK YET?



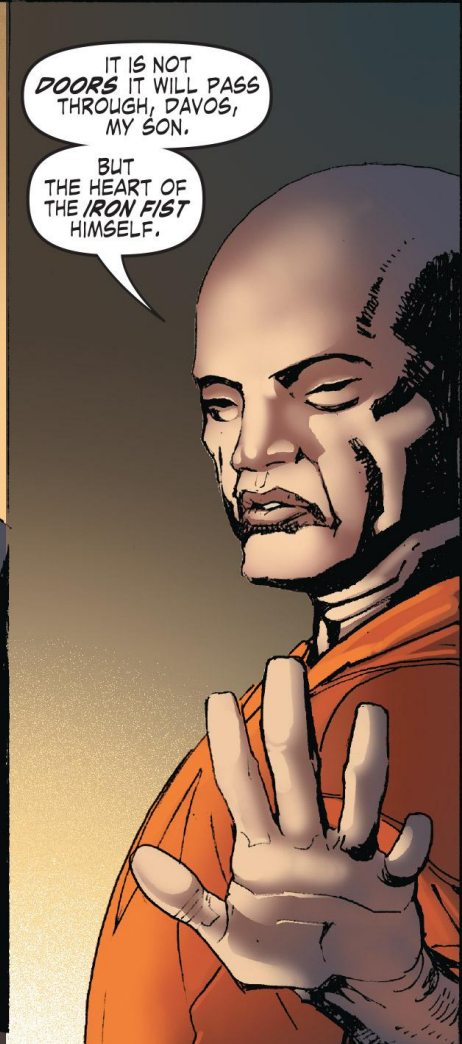
K'un-Lun. Now.





SO THE
RUMORS ARE
TRUE.

I SHALL
ALLOW **NO ONE** TO
PASS THROUGH THOSE
DOORS.

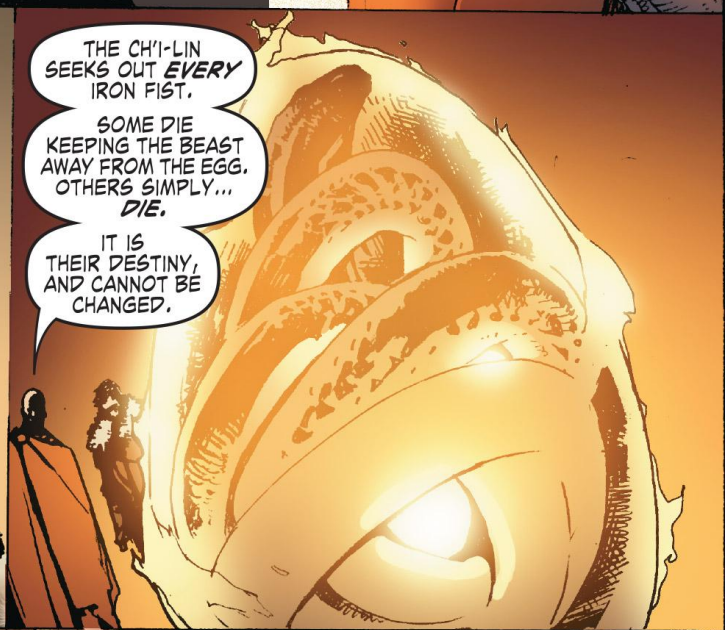


IT IS NOT
DOORS IT WILL PASS
THROUGH, DAVOS,
MY SON.

BUT
THE HEART OF
THE **IRON FIST**
HIMSELF.



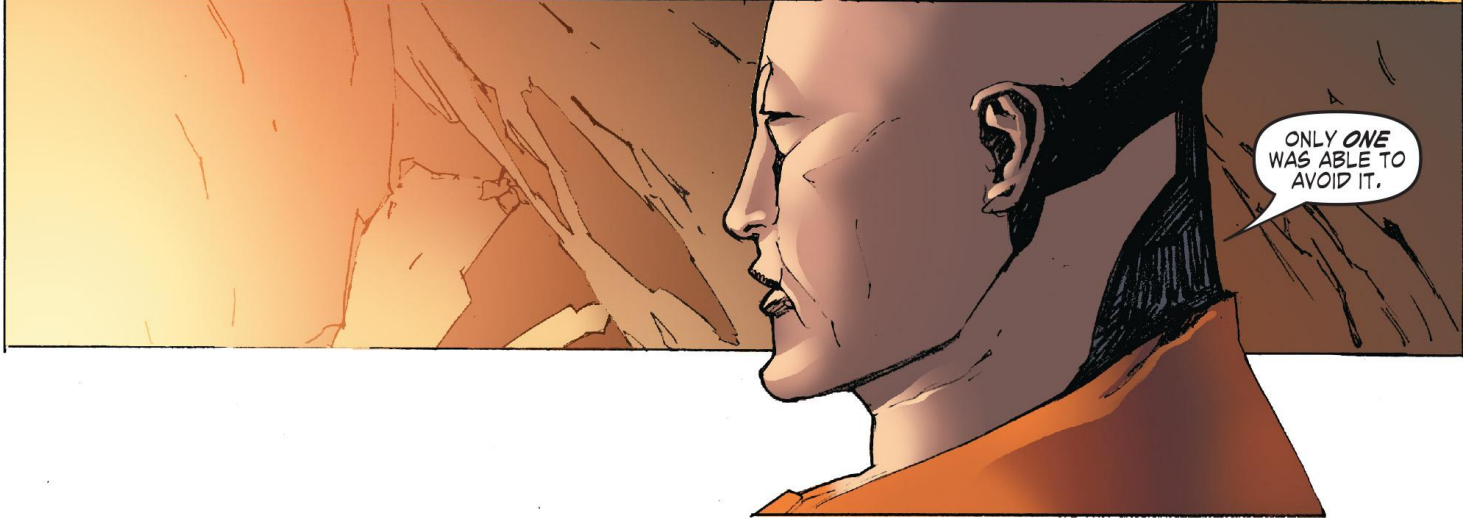
DANNY
RAND?
SHOULDN'T
YOU WA--



THE CH'I-LIN
SEEKS OUT **EVERY**
IRON FIST.

SOME DIE
KEEPING THE BEAST
AWAY FROM THE EGG.
OTHERS SIMPLY...
DIE.

IT IS
THEIR DESTINY,
AND CANNOT BE
CHANGED.



ONLY **ONE**
WAS ABLE TO
AVOID IT.

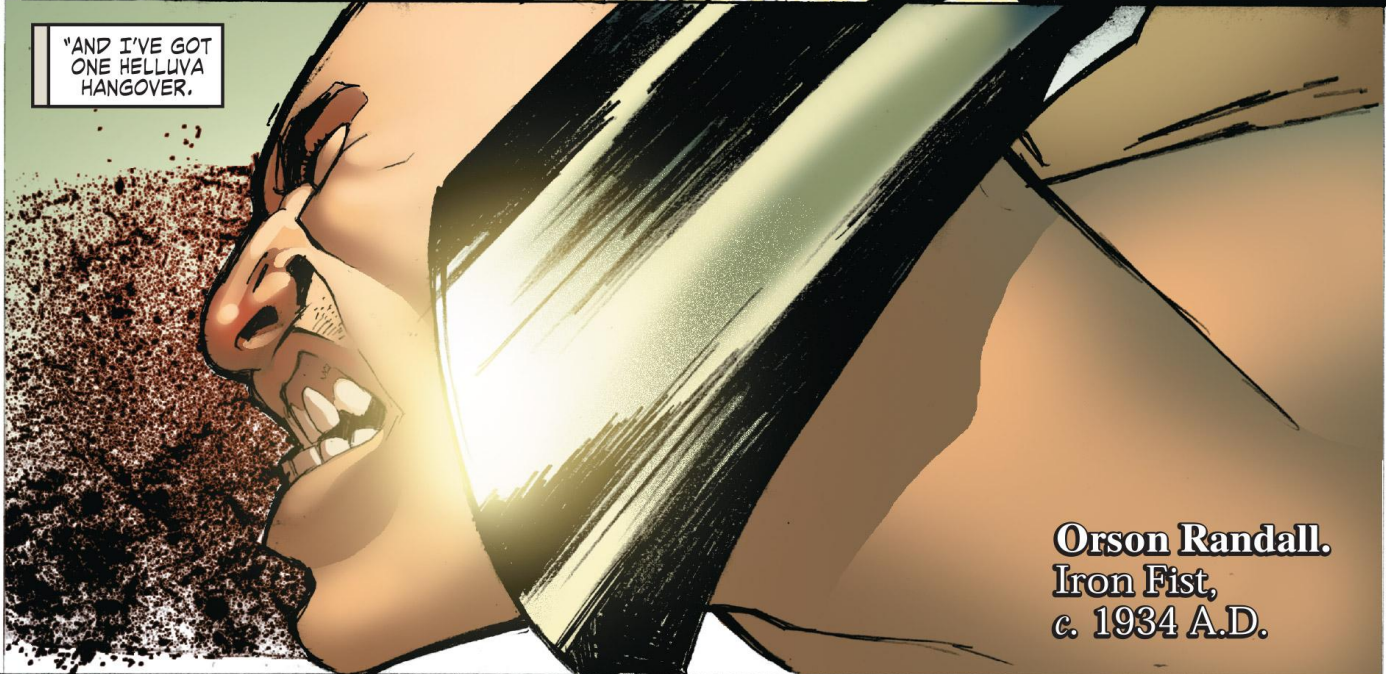
"SO I'M IN SAN FRANCISCO TWO MONTHS AGO AND I'VE GOT NINE COPS COMING AT ME WITH RIOT GUNS.



"I'VE BEEN CHASED FROM CITY TO CITY, ALL OVER THE COUNTRY.



"AND I'VE GOT ONE HELLUVA HANGOVER.



Orson Randall.
Iron Fist,
c. 1934 A.D.



"THE COPS
WEREN'T EVEN
THE WORST OF IT.



"HIM AND HIS
CRAZY MIND-
CONTROL STUFF.

"HE JUST
WOULDN'T
STOP.



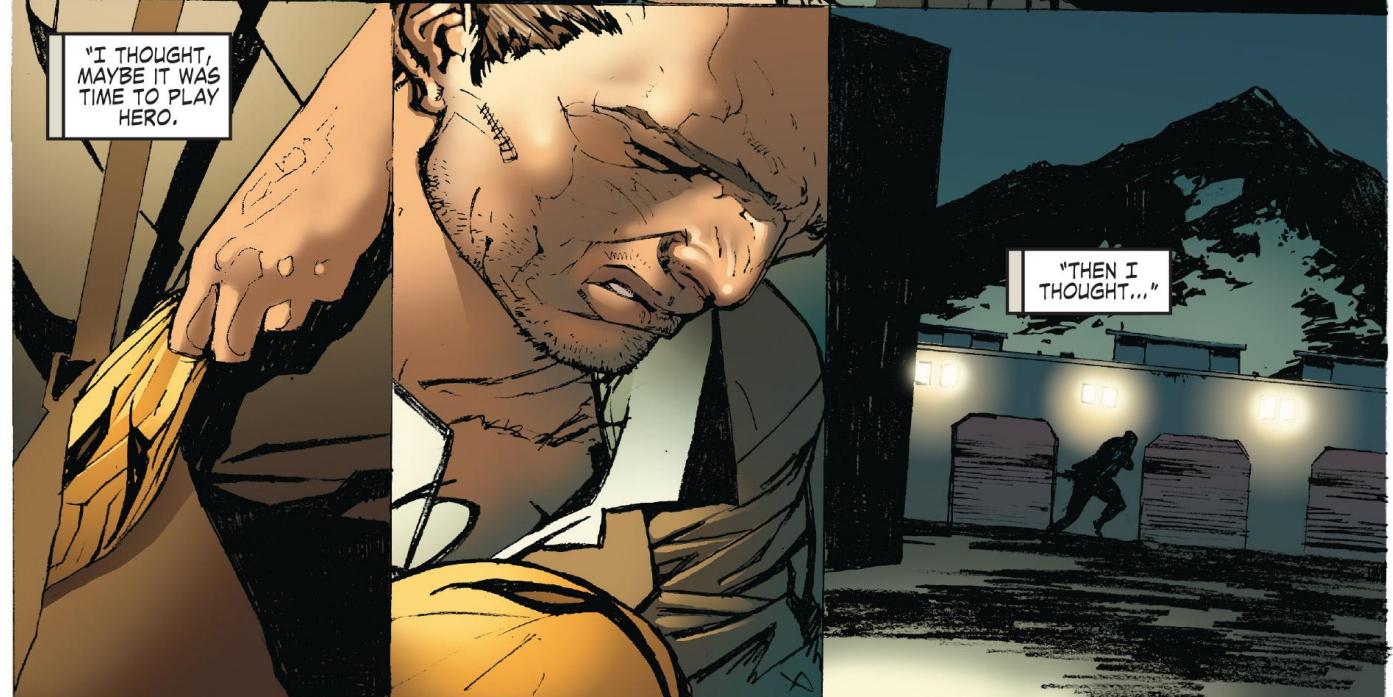
"IT WAS THAT
#&%@ING GUY.

"POPPING UP EVERY-
WHERE LIKE I.D....

"I WAS SO
DAMN TIRED
OF RUNNING.

"TIRED OF
HIDING.

"I THOUGHT,
MAYBE IT WAS
TIME TO PLAY
HERO.



"THEN I
THOUGHT..."

Lower East Side, 1934.

...PLAYIN' HERRRO'S USUALLY WHAT GETS YOU **KILLED**, ERNST.

SO **THIS** IS THE ALTERNATIVE? LIVING LIKE A BUM, INJECTING THAT JUNK INTO YOUR VEINS?

HOW DOES **THAT** SOLVE ANYTHING?

BELIEVE ME...

...IT SOLVES **EVERYTHING**.

ERNNNNST. DOAN GO.
YOU DOAN UNDERSTAN.
THISSIS THE ONLY THING KEEPIN' ME **ALIVE**.

SOME LIFE.

Rand Corporation HQ, Times Square.

HI, DANNY,
I'VE GOT... OH
GOD, YOU'RE
BLEEDING.

HEY,
NADINE.
GOT ANY
MOTRIN?

SURE I CAN'T
GET YOU SOME-
THING A LITTLE
STRONGER?

LIKE A
HOSPITAL
ROOM?

MOTRIN'S AS
STRONG AS I TAKE IT.
DON'T WANT TO END UP
IN VHI'S BILLIONAIRE
REHAB.

RIGHT BACK.

YO, I'M OUT.
GOING TO SEE WHAT
I CAN DIG UP ABOUT
THIS GUY.

PRETTY SURE
HE'S THE DUDE WE
PULLED OUT OF THAT
GANG FIGHT A
WHILE BACK.

FUNNY
WAY OF PAYING
YOU BACK.

MAYBE
HE WAS SIZING
ME UP.

HE ANTICIPATED
EVERY MOVE I MADE.
IT WAS LIKE HE HAD A
CLIFFS NOTES VERSION
OF THE *BOOK OF
THE IRON FIST*.

WE'LL
FIND HIM,
BABY.

WAIT WAIT WAIT.
THAT'S IT.

WHAT--US
FINDING HIM? YES,
THAT'S TRADITIONALLY
HOW IT WORKS.

NO.
NOT THAT.
THE *BOOK*.

The Book of the Iron Fist.

It contains the histories of all the Iron Fists that have come before me.

Kind of a family album, in a twisted way.

Unfortunately, there's no index.

Nothing helpful like, "Fist, Iron.--cause of death at the tender age of thirty-three, pg. 278."

All I have to go on are bits of legend. War stories.

Desperate battles, overwhelming odds.

In other words, classic Iron F--

DANNY?

SURE I CAN'T GET YOU SOME COFFEE? WATER?

GALLON OF BACTINE?

I'M FINE, NADINE. GO HOME. HAVE DINNER WITH YOUR BOYFRIEND. WHAT'S-HIS-NAME.

OKAY, DANNY. WHAT'S-HIS-NAME WILL BE TOUCHED YOU REMEMBERED.

That nutcase said he killed other Iron Fists.

But according to so many of these histories, we Iron Fists tend to die in battle. Even Orson, who...

Hey. Waitamminute.

AH, DAN. YOU'RE HERE. GREAT.

SORRY TO INTERRUPT QUIET TIME, BUT...

PATRICK, DUDE...UM, SACRED SPACE HERE? REMEMBER?



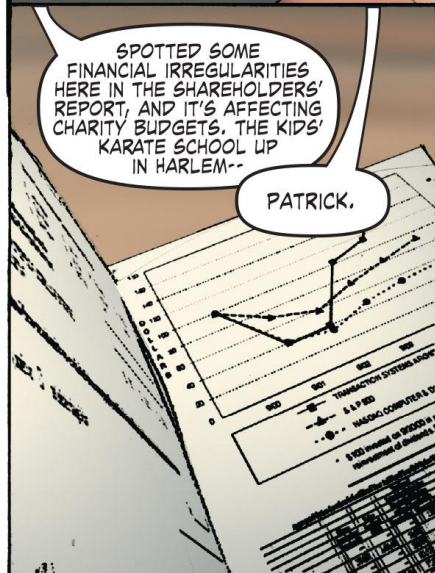
YEAH YEAH,
I KNOW.

WE HAD
A *KIVA* BACK AT
SOURCE SOLUTION.COM'S
CORPORATE HQ. GREAT
PLACE TO SLEEP OFF
A HANGOVER.

HEY,
IS THAT
BLOOD?

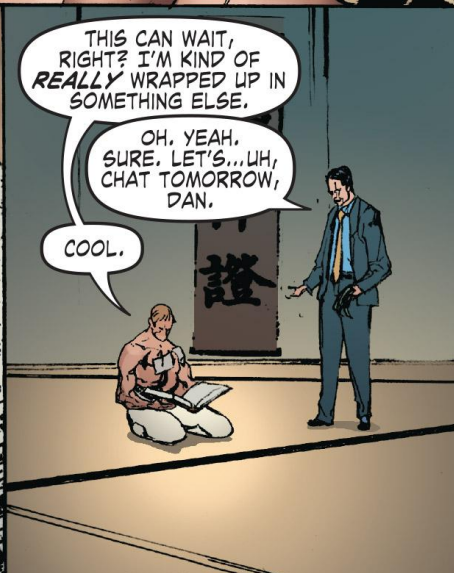


...
WHAT'S
UP?



SPOTTED SOME
FINANCIAL IRREGULARITIES
HERE IN THE SHAREHOLDERS'
REPORT, AND IT'S AFFECTING
CHARITY BUDGETS. THE KIDS'
KARATE SCHOOL UP
IN HARLEM--

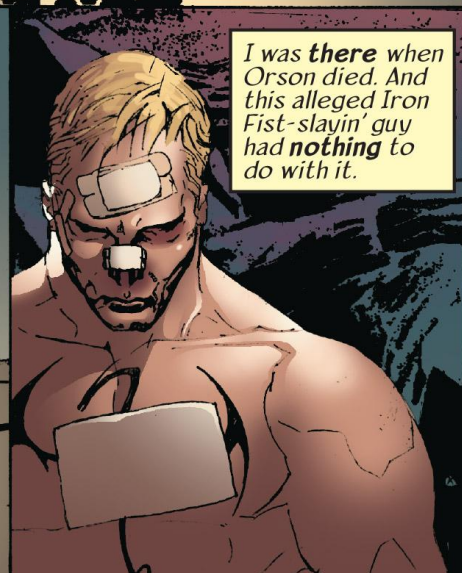
PATRICK.



THIS CAN WAIT,
RIGHT? I'M KIND OF
REALLY WRAPPED UP IN
SOMETHING ELSE.

OH, YEAH.
SURE. LET'S...UH,
CHAT TOMORROW,
DAN.

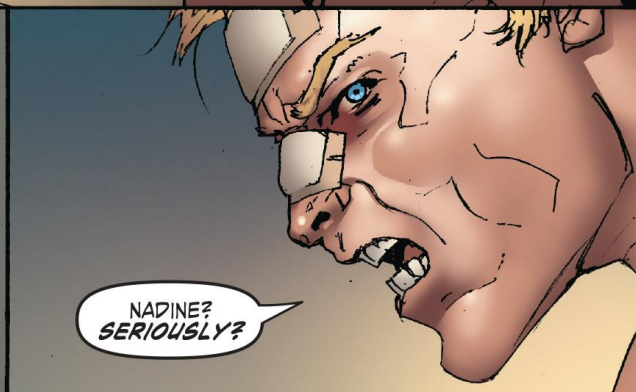
COOL.



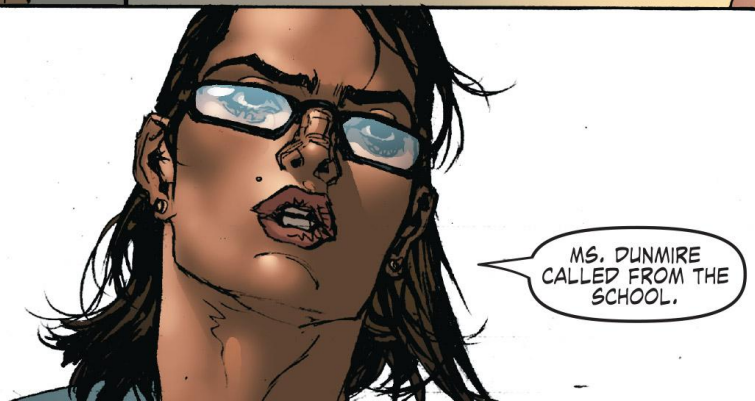
I was *there* when
Orson died. And
this alleged Iron
Fist-slavin' guy
had *nothing* to
do with it.



UM,
DANNY?



NADINE?
SERIOUSLY?



MS. DUNMIRE
CALLED FROM THE
SCHOOL.

"THERE'S
SOMETHING
WRONG."

I'VE HAD
75 YEARS TO STUDY
HIS WEAKNESSES,
MASTER.

AND I'M
LOOKING AT HIS
GREATEST ONES
RIGHT NOW.

HARLEM
1417

school of
thunder
LEARNING
CENTER

鐵拳
19

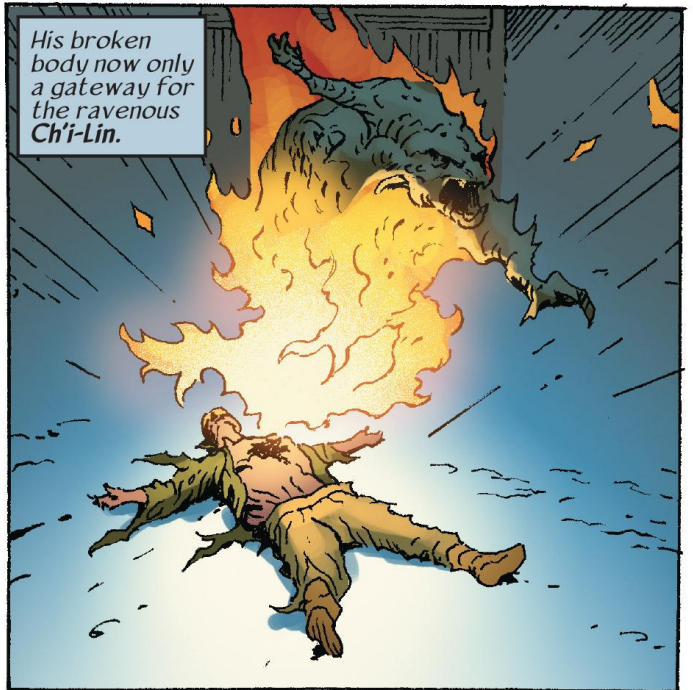


Outside the Sacred Cave
of the dragon Shou-Lao,
Kun-Lun, 1878 A.D.



The corpse of
Jun-Fan appeared
at dawn.

His broken
body now only
a gateway for
the ravenous
Ch'i-Lin.



Another Iron
Fist unable
to escape
his fate...



And now...

...we must
face ours.



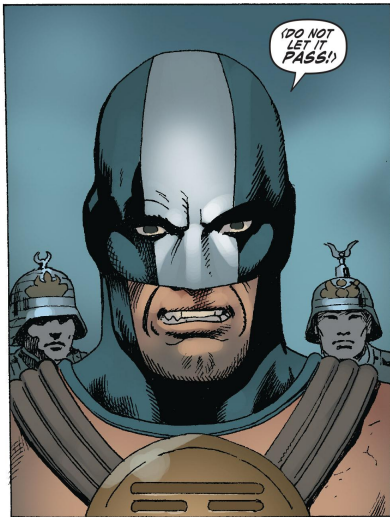
A hundred boys, as soon as they were old enough to stand, were chosen and trained for just this moment.

The battle to protect the dragon's egg- and the future of this city.



(YOUR IMMORTAL WEAPON IS DEAD!)

(WE ARE THE ONLY LINE OF DEFENSE.)



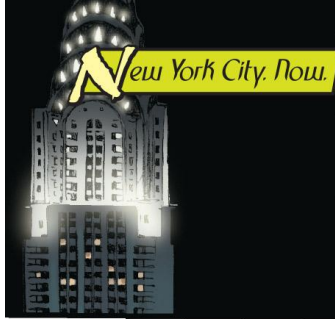
(DO NOT LET IT PASS!)



YEEEEEE-HAAAAH!!



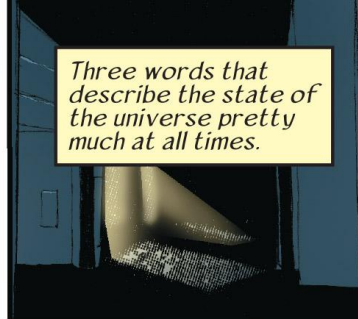
The MORTAL IRON FIST Chapter Three



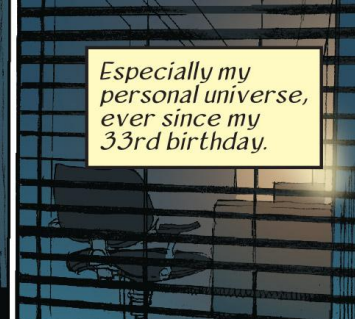
New York City. Now.



"There's something wrong," she said.



Three words that describe the state of the universe pretty much at all times.



Especially my personal universe, ever since my 33rd birthday.

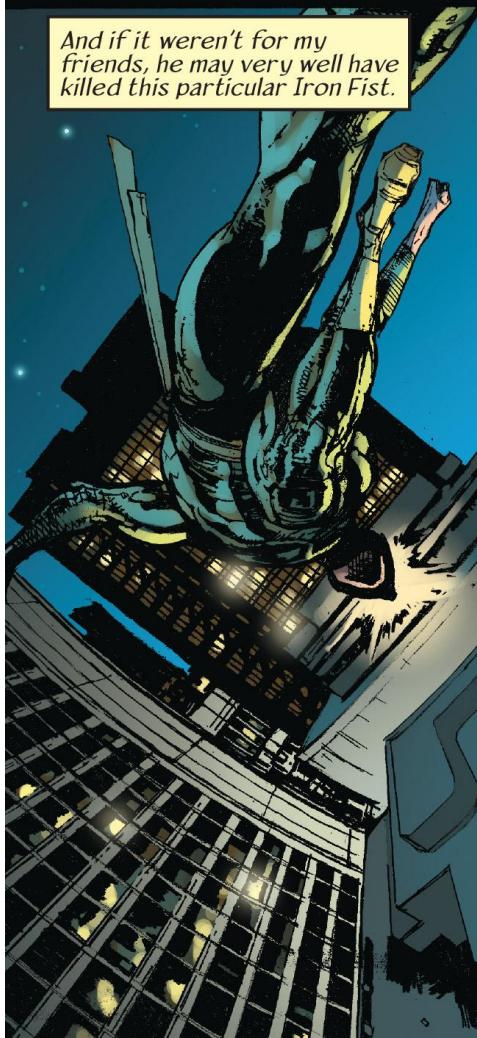


...AND HE HAS ALL OF THE CHILDREN JUST STANDING THERE, DANNY, LIKE THEY'RE--

I'M LEAVING RIGHT NOW.



Ever since this Chinese guy showed up, claiming to be the guy who kills Iron Fists.



And if it weren't for my friends, he may very well have killed this particular Iron Fist.



Now I receive word from my School of Thunder up in Harlem-- "There's something wrong."



There's *always* something wrong.



Some little nasty surprise around the corner, or behind the door, or under your bed.



And it's never what you expect.





I CAN HEAR
YOUR PATHETIC VOICE
IN THEIR THOUGHTS. YOUR
INSTRUCTION. YOUR
ENCOURAGEMENT.

SO
MUCH EFFORT,
WASTED ON THESE
CHILDREN OF
PEASANTS.



BUT I *DO*
SEE THE APPEAL,
MR. RAND.

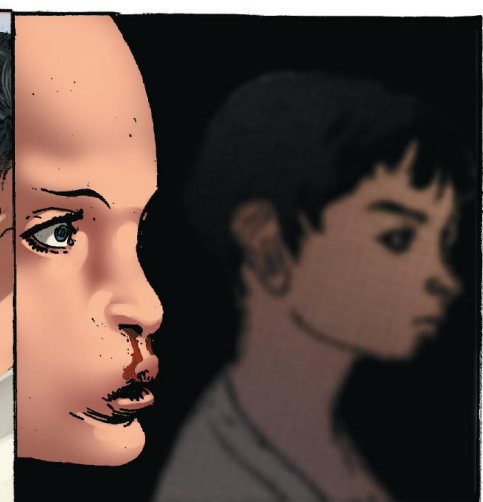
YOUNG MINDS
ARE SO EASY TO
SHAPE...



YEEEE-AH!

STOP!

KRAK



THIS IS
ABOUT YOU
AND ME. LET
THEM GO.

NOW.



I SAY THE
WORD, AND THEY RIP
THE FLESH FROM EACH
OTHER'S BONES.

AND IT WILL NOT
STOP UNTIL THE LAST
YOUNG HEARTBEAT
STOPS.

UNLESS
YOU KNEEL
BEFORE
ME.



I GO IN,
START PUTTING THE
BEATDOWN ON HIM,
YOU GET THE
KIDS--

NO.

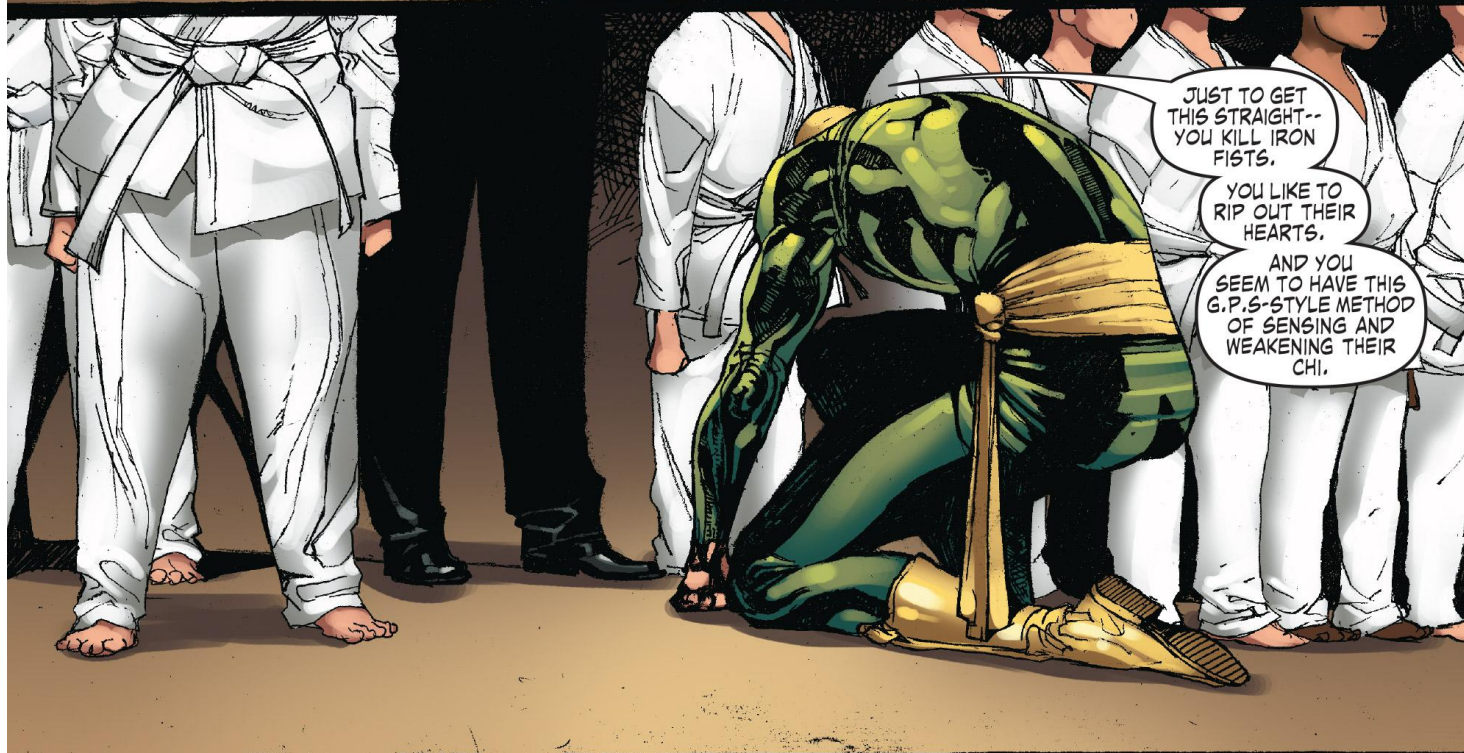


I'D NEVER
BE ABLE TO STOP
ALL OF THEM IN
TIME.



DANNY--
NO, MAN...

IT'S
OKAY--



JUST TO GET
THIS STRAIGHT--
YOU KILL IRON
FISTS.

YOU LIKE TO
RIP OUT THEIR
HEARTS.

AND YOU
SEEM TO HAVE THIS
G.P.S.-STYLE METHOD
OF SENSING AND
WEAKENING THEIR
CHI.



BUT DOES
THAT WORK WITH
OTHER IMMORTAL
WEAPONS?



OTHER...?



DIDN'T
THINK SO.



LET THE CHILDREN GO OR I SHATTER YOUR RIB CAGE.

When I received the call from Ms. Dunmire at the school, I made two calls of my own.

One to Luke-- who's been busy tracking this guy down.



And one to John Aman, the Prince of Orphans, who gathered the champions of the Mystical Cities of Heaven who weren't otherwise engaged.

BRIDE OF NINE SPIDERS. BEAUTIFUL. CREEPY.

DOG BROTHER #1. FERAL. FUNNY.

FAT COBRA. DEADLY. FAT.



NICE STRATEGY.

I HAVE MY MOMENTS.



KILL, CHILDREN, KILL!

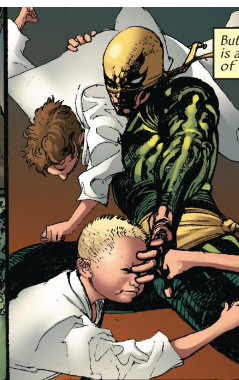




There are just enough of us to go around.



And the dogs.



But I know this is all just a game of distraction.



This Iron Fist Slayer is rolling with the punches, waiting for the moment to take his shot.



The shot he seems to love.

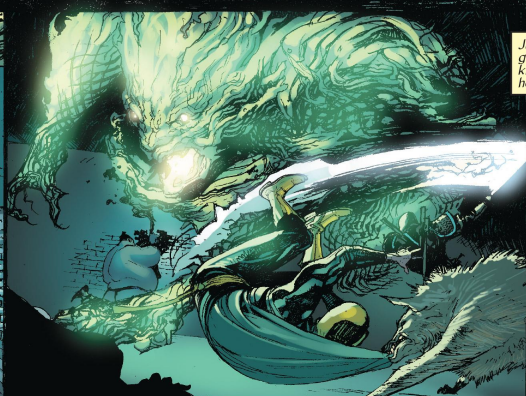


You know-- the one where he punches through my rib cage and rips out my heart.

The shot that could end it all.



And would, if it weren't for my friends.



Just gotta get these kids out of here.



I GET IT. HE PULLS A 12-YEAR-OLD, YOU PULL A FAT COBRA.

THE NEW YORK WAY.





IT'S OKAY,
GUYS. YOUR
PARENTS ARE ON
THEIR WAY.

SENSEI
DANNY SAYS YOU
WERE VERY, VERY
BRAVE...



EVER MET
ANYTHING LIKE
THIS BEFORE,
JOHN?

POWERFUL
FORCES ALWAYS
HAVE THEIR
OPPOSITES.

YOU
WERE UNLUCKY
ENOUGH TO
CROSS PATHS
WITH YOURS.

YEAH. BUT
YOU KNOW WHAT
REALLY BOTHERS
ME?



THE THUNDERER
NEVER MENTIONED
THIS TO ME. NOT A WORD,
IN ALL THOSE YEARS
OF TRAINING.

ORSON
DIDN'T, EITHER,
AND HE MUST HAVE
CROSSED PATHS WITH
THIS THING.

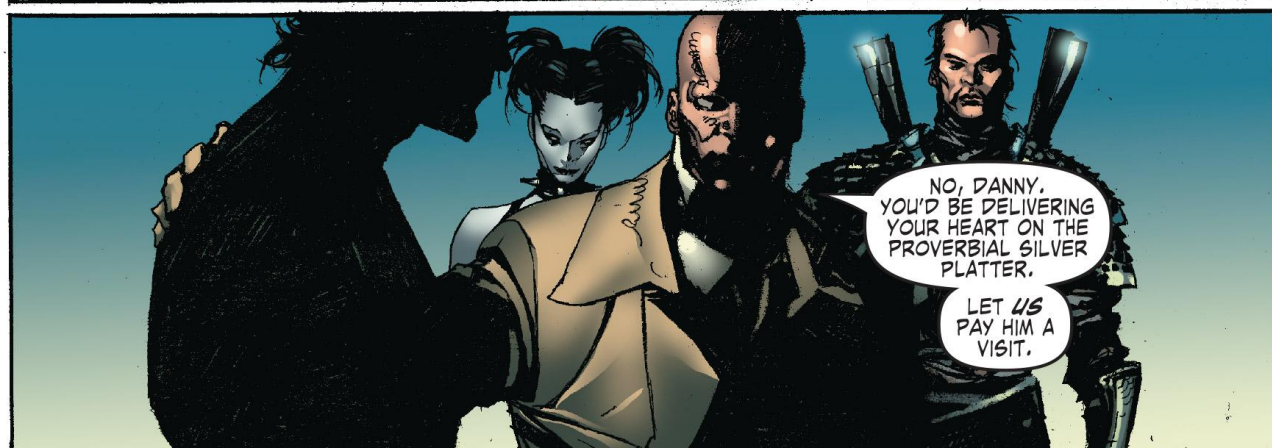
I'M WORKING
BLIND HERE.



YO. I GOT
CREEP-O'S NAME
AND ADDRESS.
ZHOU CHENG,
GOT A PENTHOUSE
ON THE UPPER
WEST SIDE.

TRACKED IT
DOWN FROM THAT
CABBIE WHO PICKED
HIM UP THE OTHER
NIGHT.

THEN WE
SHOULDN'T
BE STANDING
AROUND
HERE.



NO, DANNY.
YOU'D BE DELIVERING
YOUR HEART ON THE
PROVERBIAL SILVER
PLATTER.

LET *US*
PAY HIM A
VISIT.

I didn't put up an argument. My new pal Zhou Cheng couldn't squelch the powers of every Immortal Weapon...just mine.

Cage and Misty agreed to babysit **me** while I looked for answers.

This isn't their battle, but I couldn't pry them away from me if I tried.

You know, if I **do** have to die at 33, at least...

Okay, stop it, Morbid Man.

Look for your answers.

I call the south of France. It's morning there.

Though I'm not so much worried about Ernst Erskine being awake.

I just hope he's still alive.

My master is **angry**.

I try to tell him--I'm prepared for this. For all of this.

I've had 75 years to prepare, and there is no way Rand will escape his fate.

No matter how many other Weapons he's recruited.

PLEASE, MASTER!

I try...

PLEASE DO NOT DESPAIR--

Urk!

But he wants to speak his piece.

YOU WERE TO BRING ME TO THE **EGG**.

...MASTER...

I HUNGER. I DESIRE THE **EGG**.

YOU WERE TO BRING ME TO THE **EGG**.

... PLEASE...

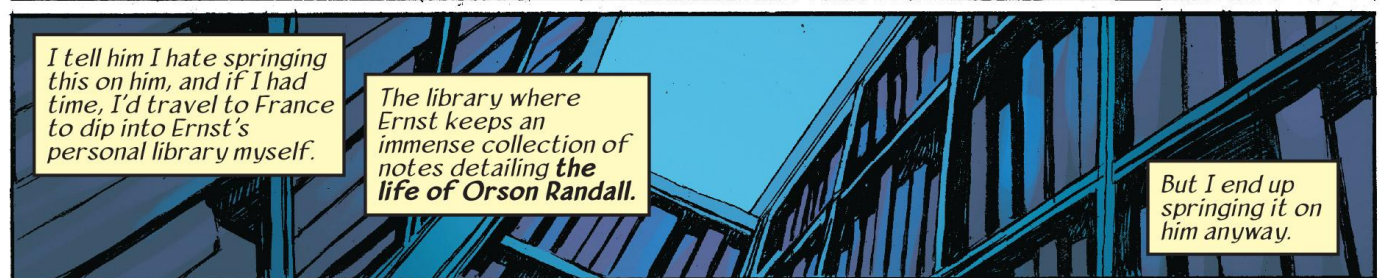
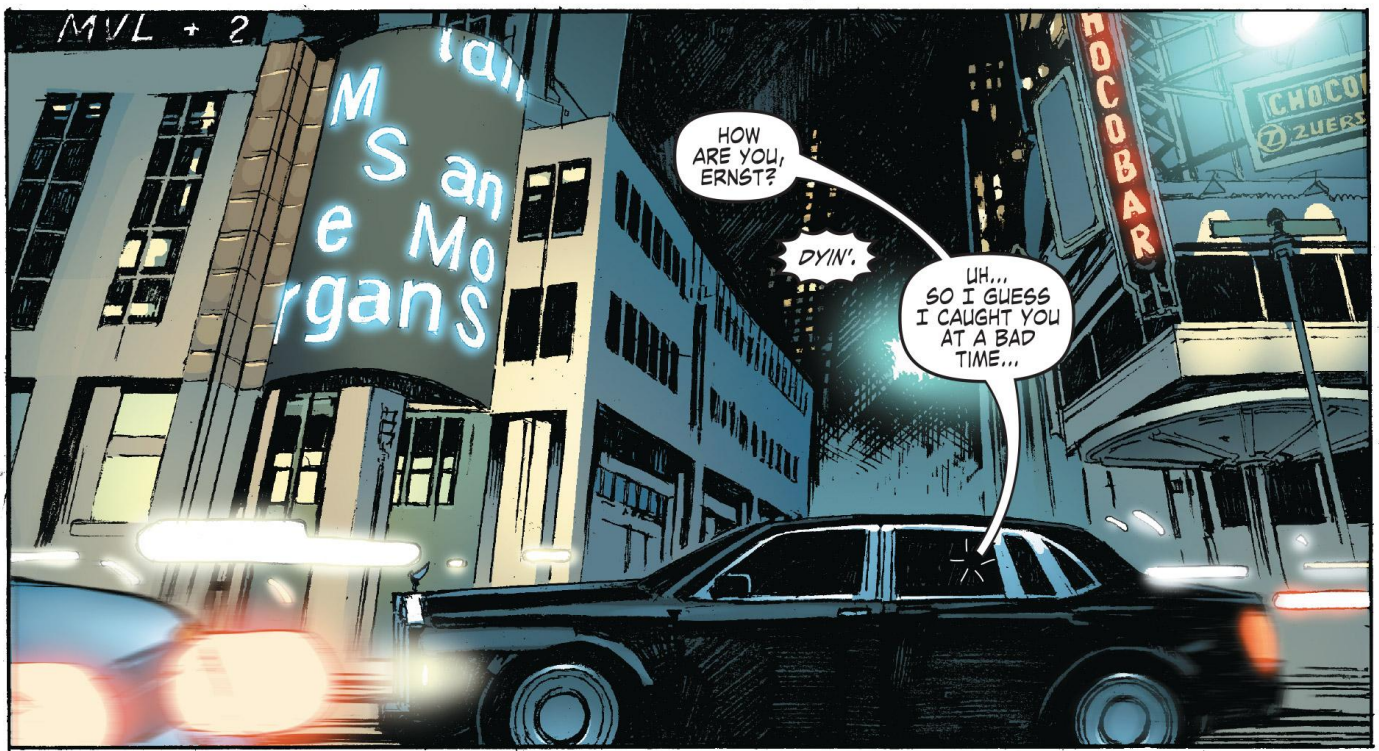
THERE WERE OTHERS BEFORE YOU. FAIL ME AGAIN AND YOU WILL BE NO MORE.

I tried to tell him plans were already underway.

But now is not the time to explain. Only to **do**.

BELOVED... THE TIME WE DISCUSSED IS UPON US.

YOU'LL FIND THE BOTTLE IN YOUR LOWER RIGHT-HAND DRAWER.





"WE THOUGHT HE WAS JUST ANOTHER MYSTIC ASSASSIN..."

"HEH. SOMETIMES I LISTEN TO THE STUFF COMING OUT OF MY MOUTH..."

"RIGHT, ERNST, BUT ABOUT..."

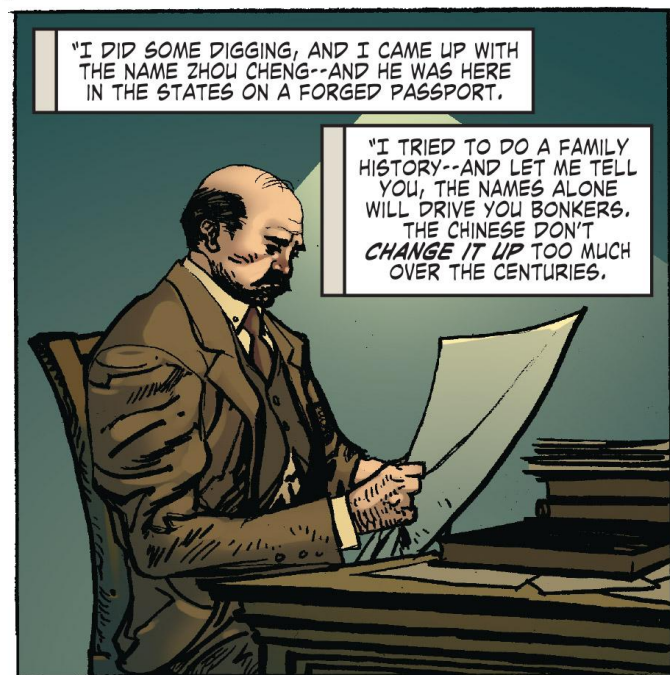
"SORRY. BUT YES, IN THOSE DAYS, IT SEEMED LIKE EVERYBODY WAS POPPING OUT OF THE WOODWORK TO HASSLE ORSON ABOUT GIVING UP HIS ROLE AS AN IMMORTAL WEAPON. WE THOUGHT THIS WAS MORE OF THE SAME."



"BUT IT WASN'T. THIS SON OF A &^%\$ WAS **RELENTLESS**. IT SEEMED PERSONAL."

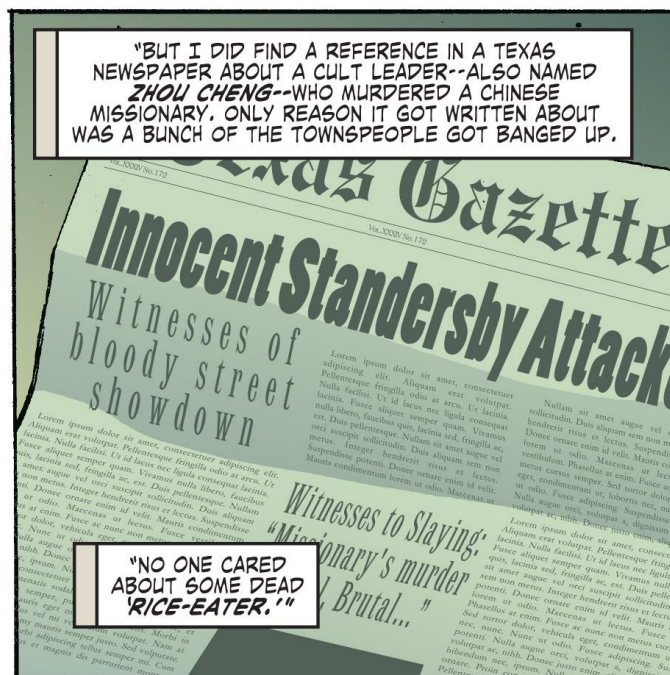
"THE THING CHASED ORSON NO MATTER WHERE HE HID."

"HE TURNED TO ME FOR HELP."



"I DID SOME DIGGING, AND I CAME UP WITH THE NAME ZHOU CHENG--AND HE WAS HERE IN THE STATES ON A FORGED PASSPORT."

"I TRIED TO DO A FAMILY HISTORY--AND LET ME TELL YOU, THE NAMES ALONE WILL DRIVE YOU BONKERS. THE CHINESE DON'T CHANGE IT UP TOO MUCH OVER THE CENTURIES."



"BUT I DID FIND A REFERENCE IN A TEXAS NEWSPAPER ABOUT A CULT LEADER--ALSO NAMED **ZHOU CHENG**--WHO MURDERED A CHINESE MISSIONARY. ONLY REASON IT GOT WRITTEN ABOUT WAS A BUNCH OF THE TOWNSPEOPLE GOT BANGED UP."

"NO ONE CARED ABOUT SOME DEAD 'RICE-EATER.'"



BUT HE NEVER DID KILL ORSON? I MEAN... OBVIOUSLY?

NO.

THE CHASE WENT ON FOR MONTHS, AND BY THAT TIME...

...WELL, LET'S JUST SAY ORSON STOPPED RUNNING FROM THE DRAGON, AND INSTEAD STARTED CHASING IT.

Bangkok, Thailand, 1933.

No more masks.

No more dragons.

No more lords, brides, heroes, assassins or **gods**.

Only the god inside the **needle**.

Here is your immortal weapon, K'un-Lun.

See my fist, curled up like an ingot of iron.

"AFTER ORSON STARTED USING, WE NEVER SAW ZHOU CHENG AGAIN."

"IT WAS LIKE HE JUST GAVE UP AND WENT AWAY."

Orson didn't defeat
this Zhou Cheng guy.

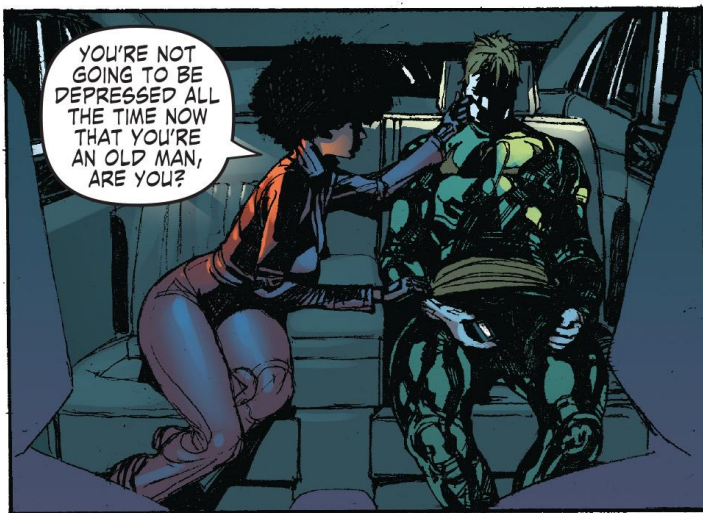
He just played a game
of **hide-and-seek**,
then drugged his chi
into **oblivion** for 75
years.

Do I fight to my
death, like every
other Iron Fist?

Or do I throw it
all away and live
like Orson?



YOU'RE NOT
GOING TO BE
DEPRESSED ALL
THE TIME NOW
THAT YOU'RE
AN OLD MAN,
ARE YOU?



He won't stop.



He will continue
to hurt those
closest to me.



I LOVE YOU.

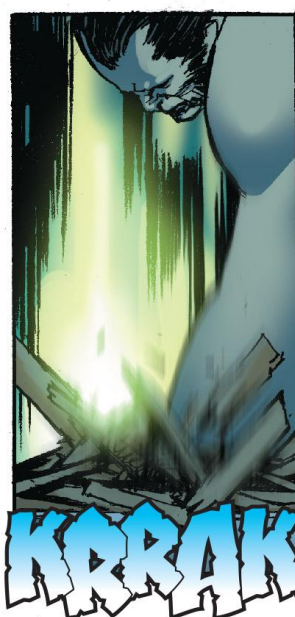
YOU, TOO.



Upper West Side.

ZHOU'S
NOT HERE.

SO THE HUNT
BEGINS. LET'S
LOOK FOR HIS
SPOOR.





Rand Headquarters.

C'MON, GUYS--

DO WHAT YOU GOT TO, MAN. FIGURE THIS OUT, HE SHOWS UP--

WE'LL TAKE HIS HEAD OFF.

They don't even question it. Don't even consider the alternatives.

They would *die* protecting me.



Which is why I strain my eyeballs looking for something I must have missed.

Orson *couldn't* have been the only one.



HEY, NADINE--WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE SO LATE?

I WAS WORRIED ABOUT THE SCHOOL. EVERYTHING OKAY?



EVERYONE'S FINE. MAN, THANKS FOR THIS.



I taste it right away.

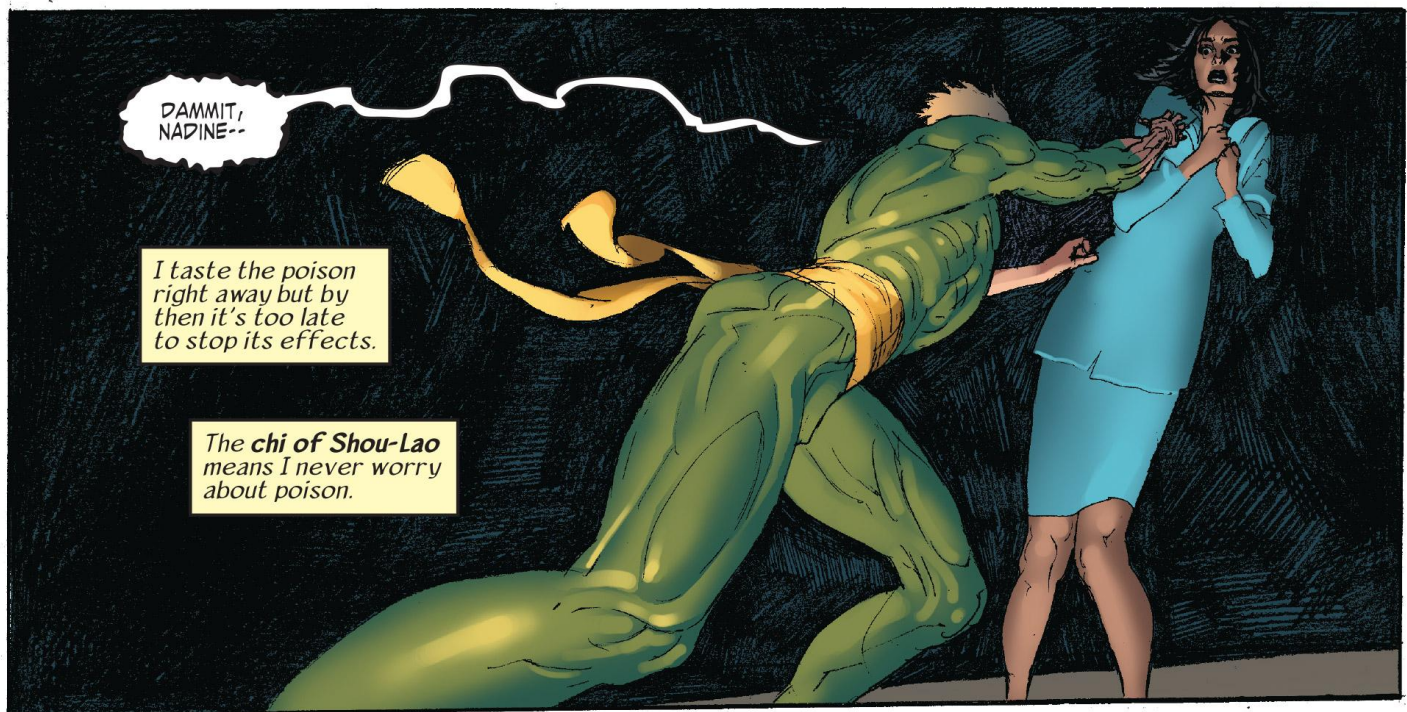


YOUR BOYFRIEND. WHAT'S-HIS-NAME.

WHAT *IS* HIS NAME?



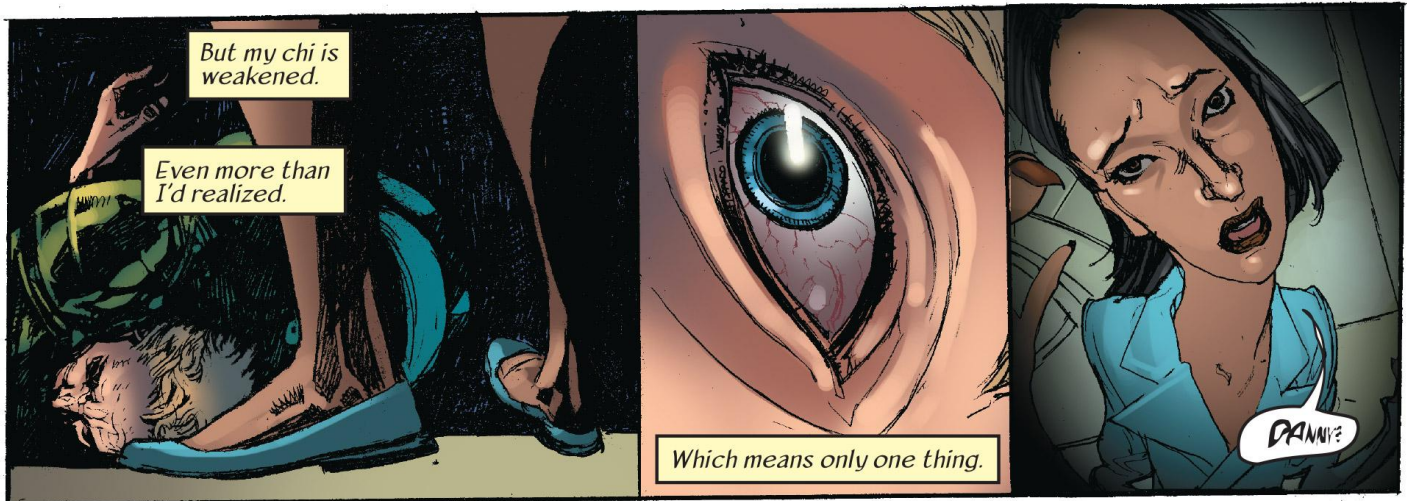
I'M SO SORRY.



DAMMIT,
NADINE--

I taste the poison
right away but by
then it's too late
to stop its effects.

The *chi* of Shou-Lao
means I never worry
about poison.



But my *chi* is
weakened.

Even more than
I'd realized.

Which means only one thing.

DAMN!?



He's here.

Old what's-his-name.

I'M SCARED,
ZHOU.

IT'S
JUST MOMENTS
AWAY NOW.
WE'LL RUN
THIS EMPIRE THE WAY
WE SEE FIT.

GO AHEAD
AND WAIT OUTSIDE,
MY LOVE.



NOW--
WHERE *WERE* WE,
MR. RAND?

鐵拳
20



K'un-Lun, 1878 A.D.

The beast pushes our army back to the mouth of the dragon's cave.



It wants the egg, and it will not give up until it has consumed it.



Its hunger is the source of its strength.



And it is very, **very** hungry.





The beast forces his way inside the cave, stepping over the young bodies of our bravest warriors.



It takes the future of our city into its foul mouth.



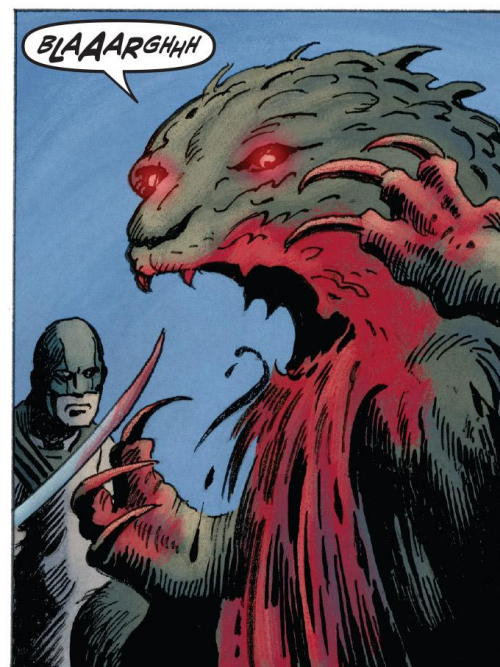
One snap and our city loses its future champion.



So I take away its ability to bite.



BLAAARGHHH



<IT'S... DISAPPEARING?>

<YOU CANNOT KILL THE CH'I-LIN. YOU CAN ONLY DISCOURAGE IT.>



<IT WILL TRY AGAIN. AND AGAIN. AND AGAIN...>

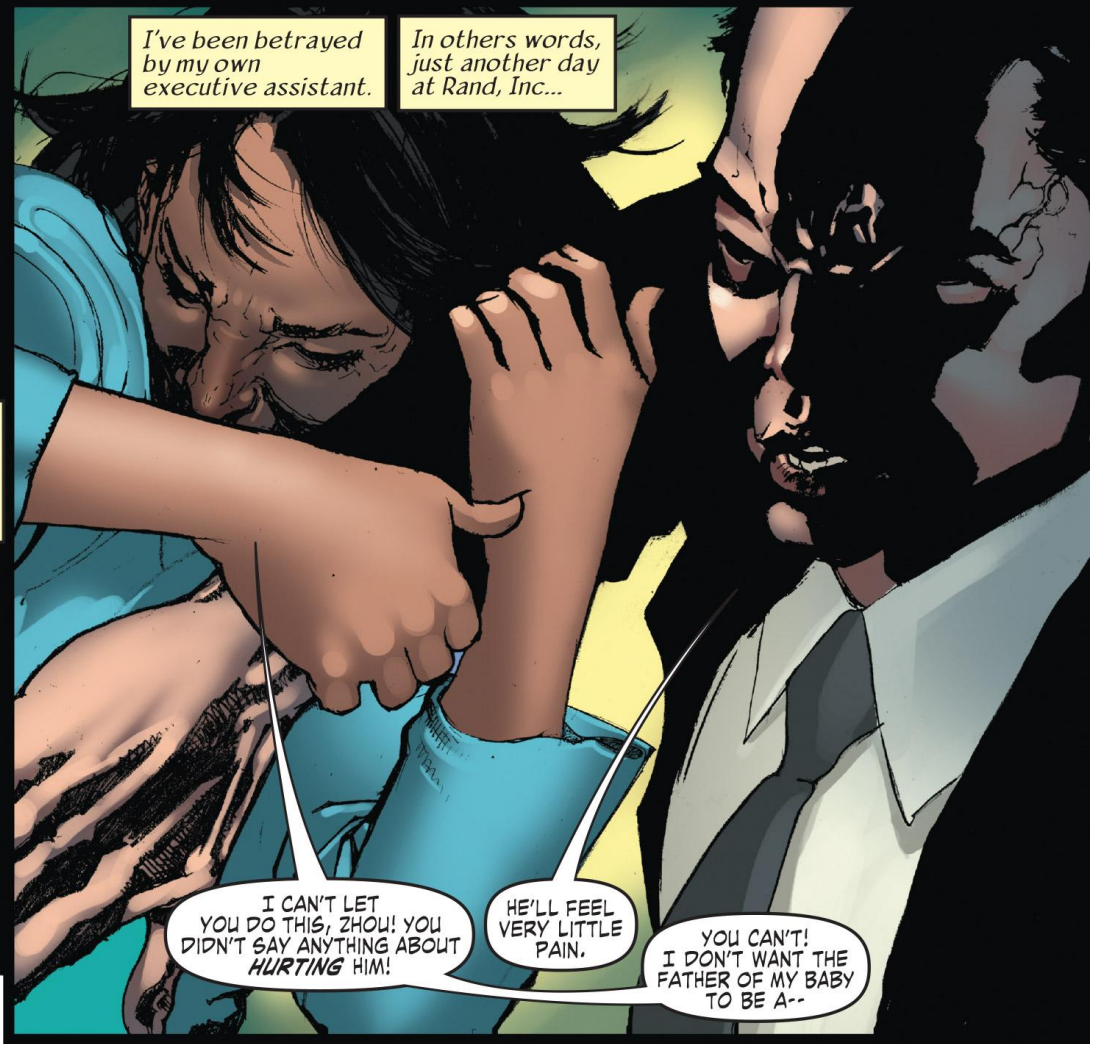






My name is Danny Rand, and I've been paralyzed.

I'm about to have my heart removed.



I've been betrayed by my own executive assistant.

In other words, just another day at Rand, Inc...

I CAN'T LET YOU DO THIS, ZHOU! YOU DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT **HURTING** HIM!

HE'LL FEEL VERY LITTLE PAIN.

YOU CAN'T! I DON'T WANT THE FATHER OF MY BABY TO BE A--



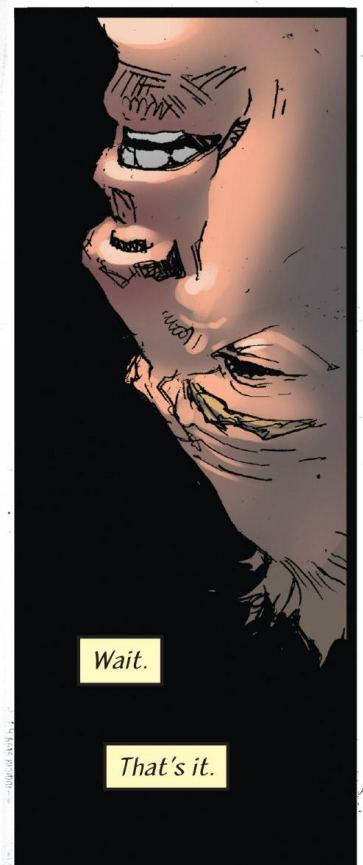
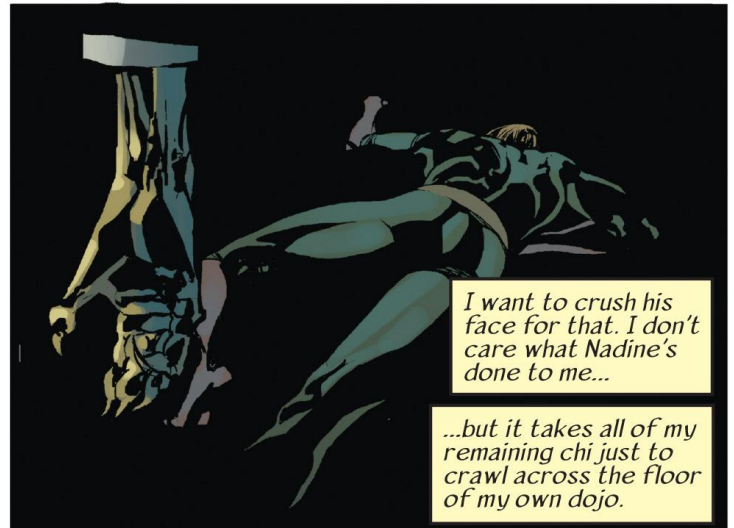
...KILLER.



BABY?



...BAY-BEE?



CAN THIS
BE IT,
AMAN?

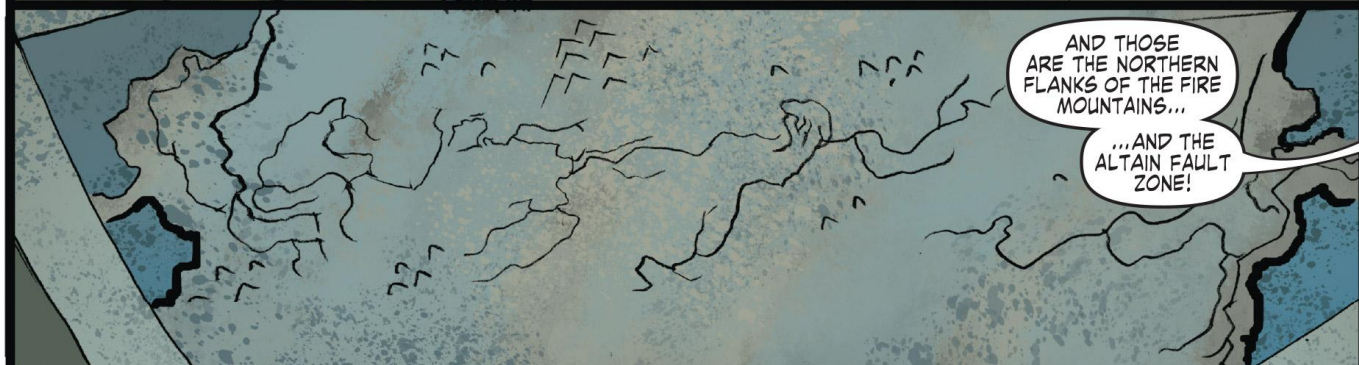
LOOK AT THE
MARKINGS ON THE
BORDER--

THE MARK OF
THE XIANGLIU. THE
EMBLEM OF THE
CHIYOU.



AND THOSE
ARE THE NORTHERN
FLANKS OF THE FIRE
MOUNTAINS...

...AND THE
ALTAIN FAULT
ZONE!



"THIS IS WHAT XAO WAS
TALKING ABOUT WHEN
HE FLUNG HIMSELF TO
HIS **DEATH** IN TIBET.

I WILL BE
AVENGED!

"AND WHAT WE'VE BEEN
SEARCHING FOR SINCE WE LEFT
OUR DIMENSIONS AND JOINED
DANNY IN NEW YORK."



THIS IS
A MAP TO
THE EIGHTH
CITY, FAT
COBRA.



AND THIS
CREATURE
CALLS IT
HOME.





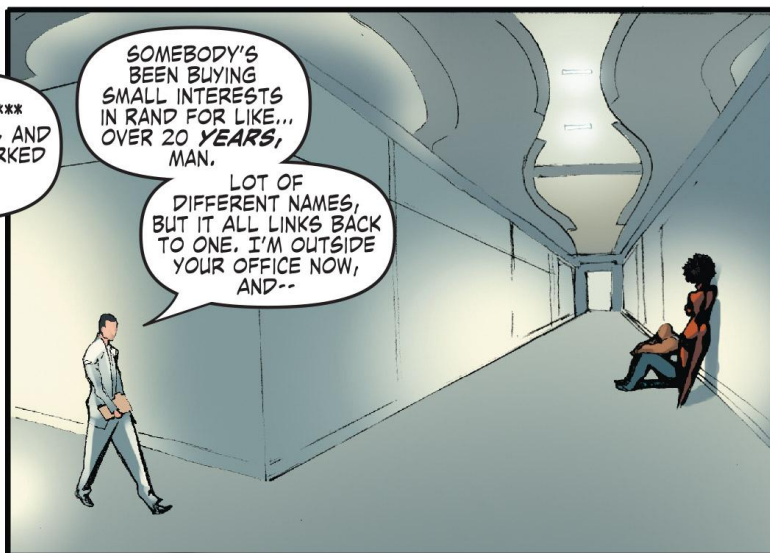
Rand HQ. Outside Danny Rand's office.

DANNY,
I DON'T KNOW
WHERE NADINE IS,
AND I TRIED YOUR
CELL, AND THIS
CAN'T WAIT.

IT'S THE
CLEVEREST ****
I'VE EVER SEEN, AND
DUDE, I'VE WORKED
AT LEHMAN
BROTHERS.

SOMEBODY'S
BEEN BUYING
SMALL INTERESTS
IN RAND FOR LIKE...
OVER 20 YEARS,
MAN.

LOT OF
DIFFERENT NAMES,
BUT IT ALL LINKS BACK
TO ONE. I'M OUTSIDE
YOUR OFFICE NOW,
AND--



HE TOLD
US NOT TO
DISTURB HIM,
BRO.

GOOD GOD--
ARE YOU
LUKE CAGE?

THEY NEVER
RECOGNIZE
ME.

SORRY--
LOOK, I'VE BEEN
TRYING TO REACH
DANNY BECAUSE
THERE'S--

LOOK.
I GET IT.
BUSINESS NEVER
SLEEPS. BUT LIKE
I SAID, DANNY'S
REAL BUSY--

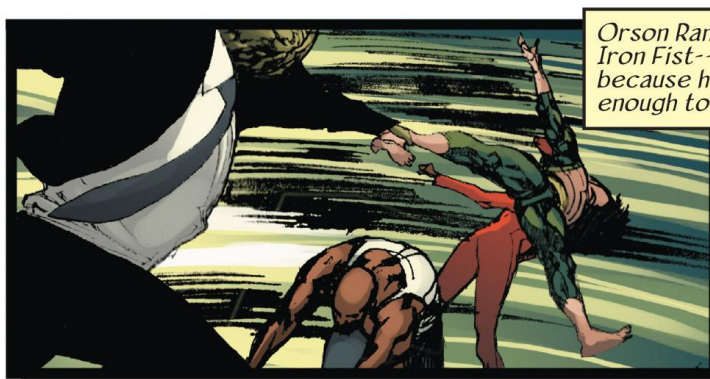


TOO BUSY TO HEAR THAT HIS SECRETARY
HAS BEEN DATING A GUY WHO'S BEEN
SLOWLY SEIZING CONTROL OF RAND, INC.
OVER THE PAST 20 YEARS?



TELL HIM
I BROUGHT THIS
TO YOU!





Orson Randall--the previous Iron Fist--avoided this thing because he dampened his chi enough to become invisible.

I'm going to do the same.



AGH!



But unlike Orson, I'm going to stay and fight.

I'm going to fight because I can.



Before our family trek to the K'un-Lun mountains.

Before my father's screams.

Before his long fall to his death.



Before the **wolves** took my mother from me.



Before I was saved by the inhabitants of a mystical city.



Before the Thunderer taught me how to fight...I was **still** a **warrior**.

And that's how
I fight now.



Like an angry
eight-year-old
who had his
parents stolen
from him.



Just an angry kid,
minus his training,
minus a mystical
dragon's chi...



A kid who just wants
this s.o.b. to stop.

GNHUUH!



MY MAN.



He still knows how to hurt me.



But without being able to read
my chi, he doesn't know how
to **defend himself** against me.





I'VE GOT
ONE FOR *EACH* OF
YOUR UGLY-@#%
FACES.



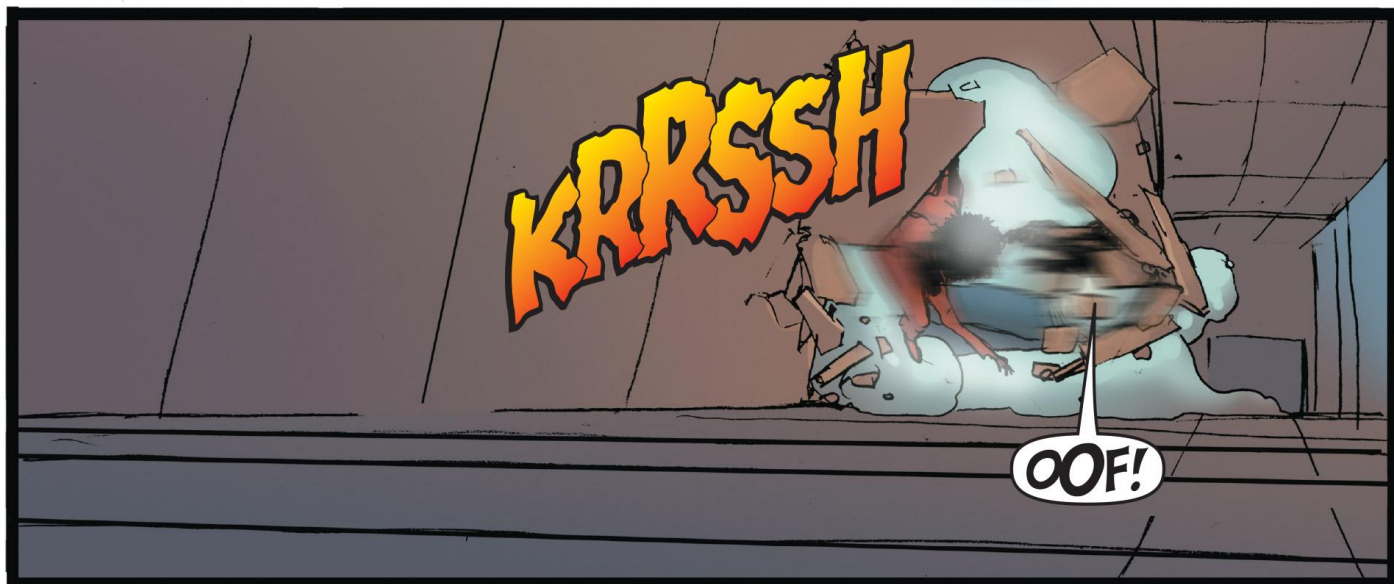
YOU KNOW
WHAT IT'S GOING
TO COME DOWN
TO, ZHOU?

WHO WANTS
IT *MORE*.



THEN,
MR. RAND, YOU
ARE SURE TO
LOSE.

YOU DON'T
KNOW HOW MUCH
WE WANT
THIS.



KRRSSH

OOF!



Rand Tower has something like no other skyscraper in New York City.



A sweet little feature that would probably make the building inspectors have kittens.

click



Windows that open.

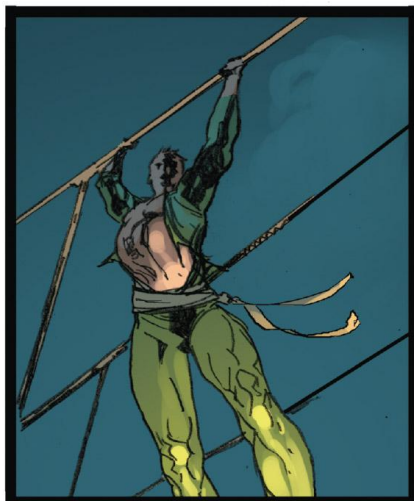
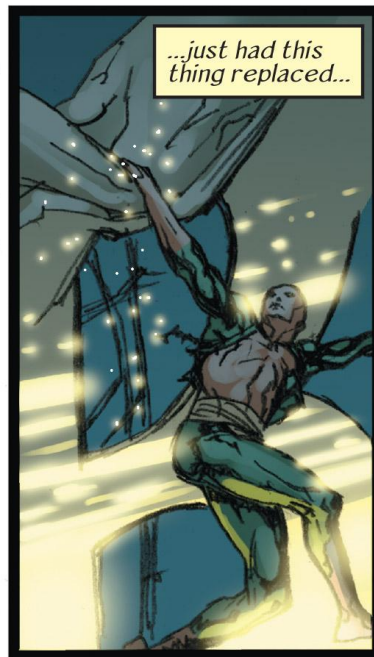
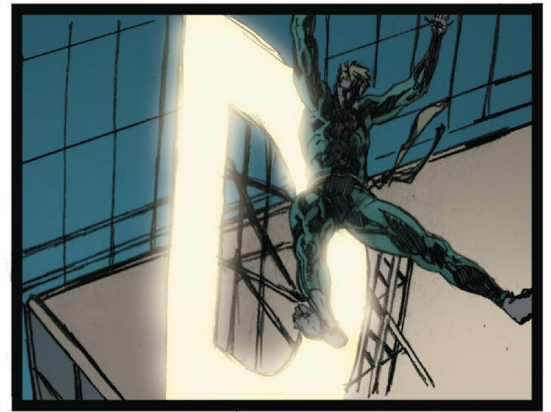
WHOOOSH



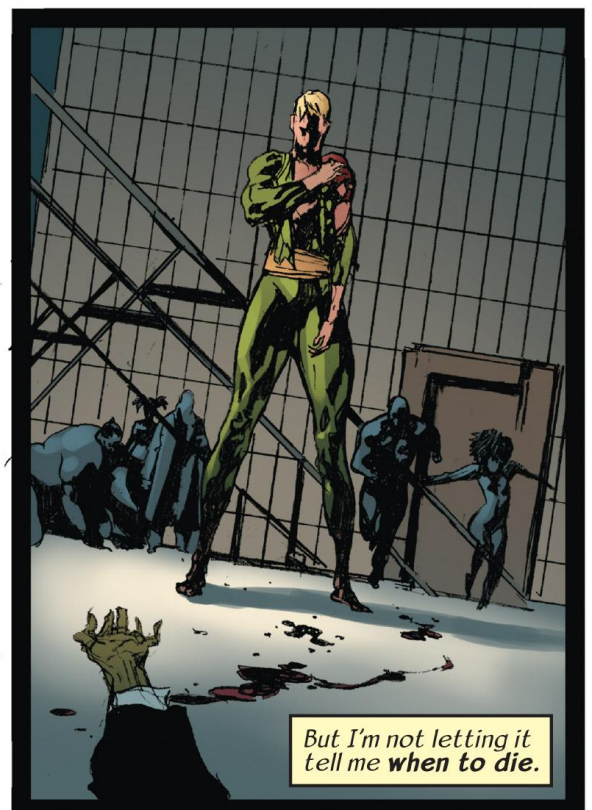
Gotta draw him outside, away from everyone el--

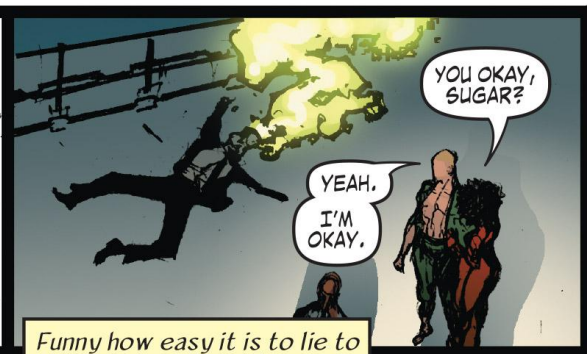


OH NO, MR. RAND.









YOU OKAY, SUGAR?

YEAH.
I'M OKAY.

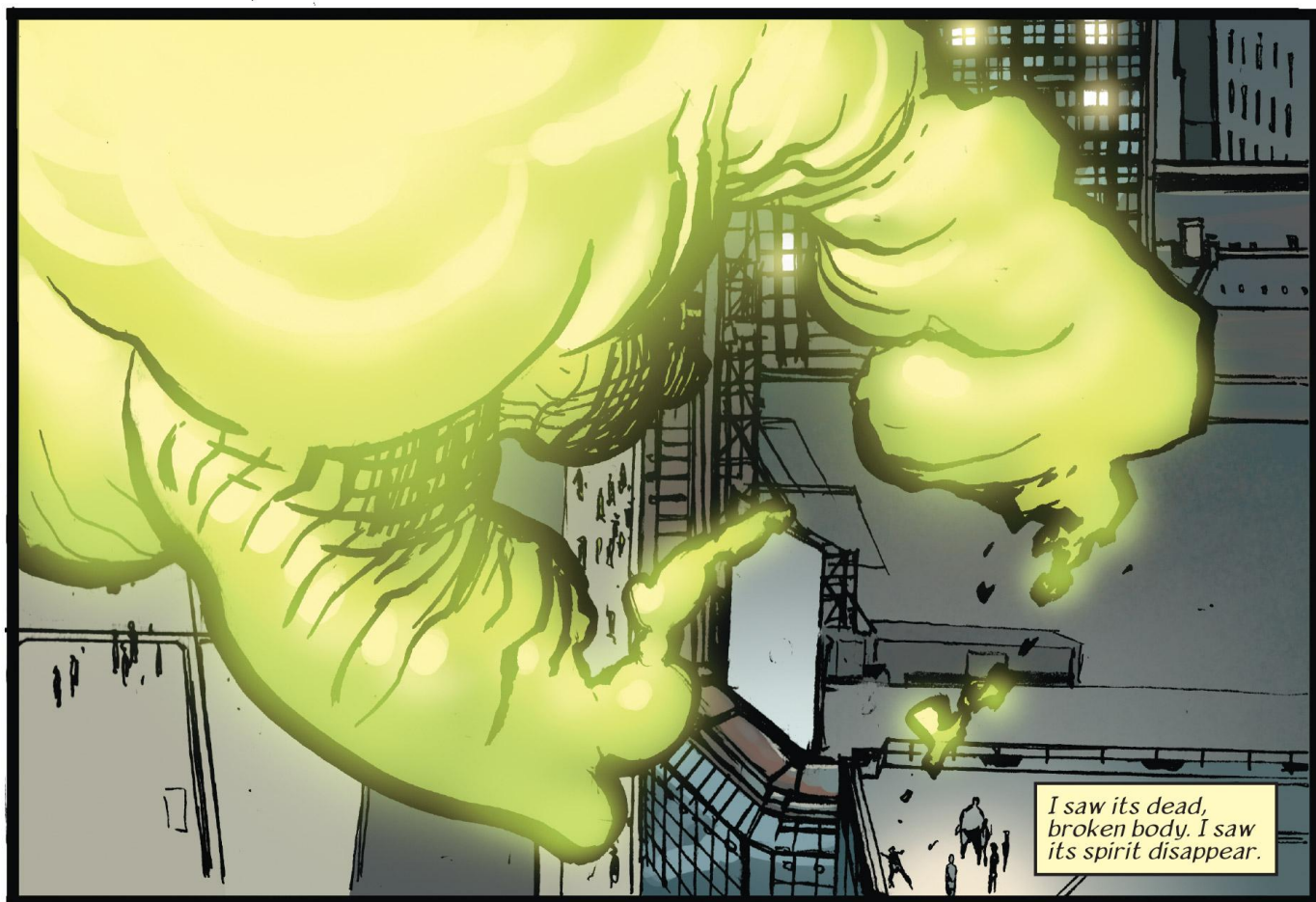
Funny how easy it is to lie to the ones you love the most.



THE HELL HAPPENED TO YOU GUYS?

WE WERE BLOWN UP. FORTUNATELY, COBRA'S SIZABLE BODY ABSORBED MOST OF THE BLAST.

UHH.



I saw its dead, broken body. I saw its spirit disappear.



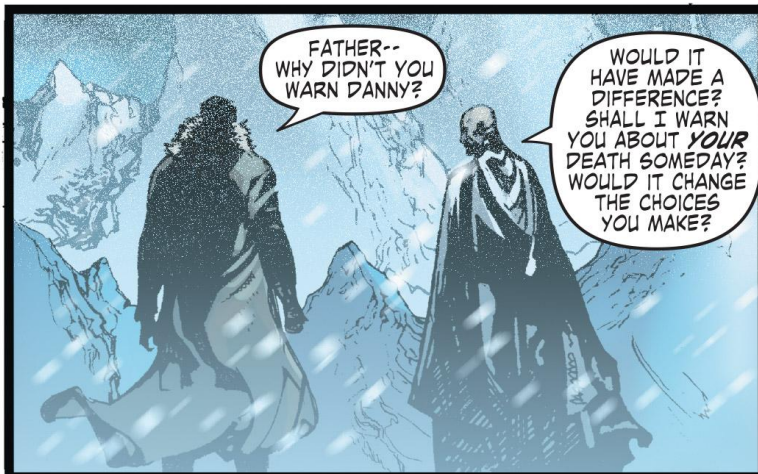
So why did I have the horrible feeling that this was far from over?



K'un-Lun. Now.

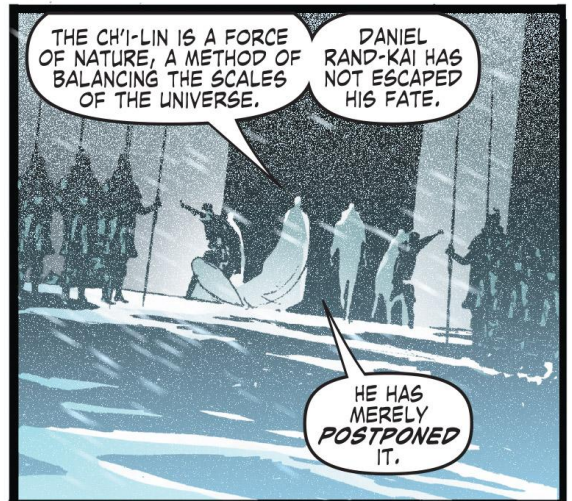
STAND
DOWN.

IRON FIST
HAS DEFEATED
THE BEAST.



FATHER--
WHY DIDN'T YOU
WARN DANNY?

WOULD IT
HAVE MADE A
DIFFERENCE?
SHALL I WARN
YOU ABOUT *YOUR*
DEATH SOMEDAY?
WOULD IT CHANGE
THE CHOICES
YOU MAKE?



THE CH'I-LIN IS A FORCE
OF NATURE, A METHOD OF
BALANCING THE SCALES
OF THE UNIVERSE.

DANIEL
RAND-KAI HAS
NOT ESCAPED
HIS FATE.

HE HAS
MERELY
POSTPONED
IT.

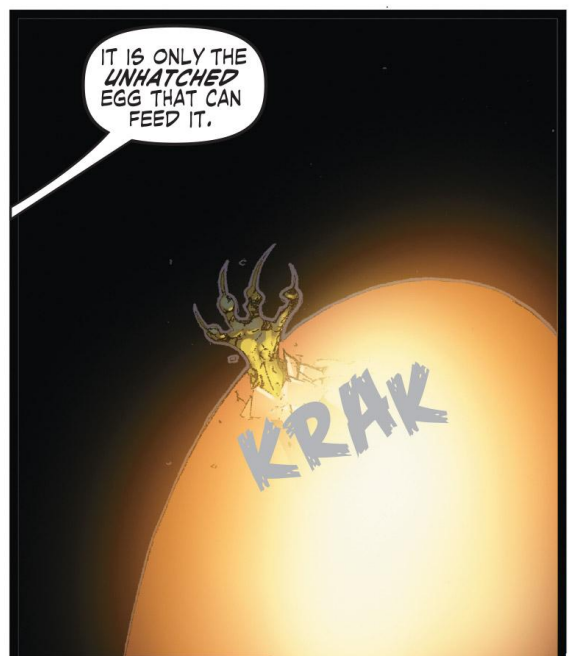


THE
CH'I-LIN WILL
TRY AGAIN?

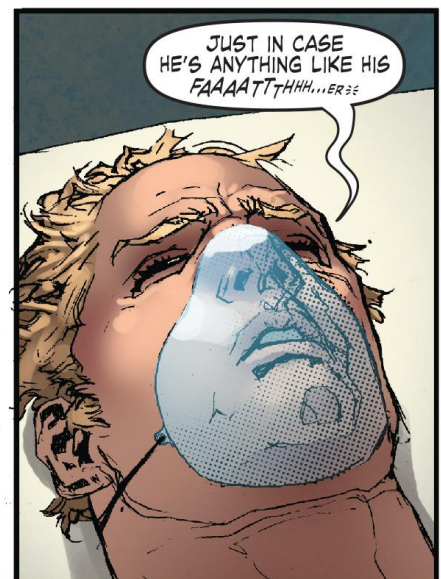
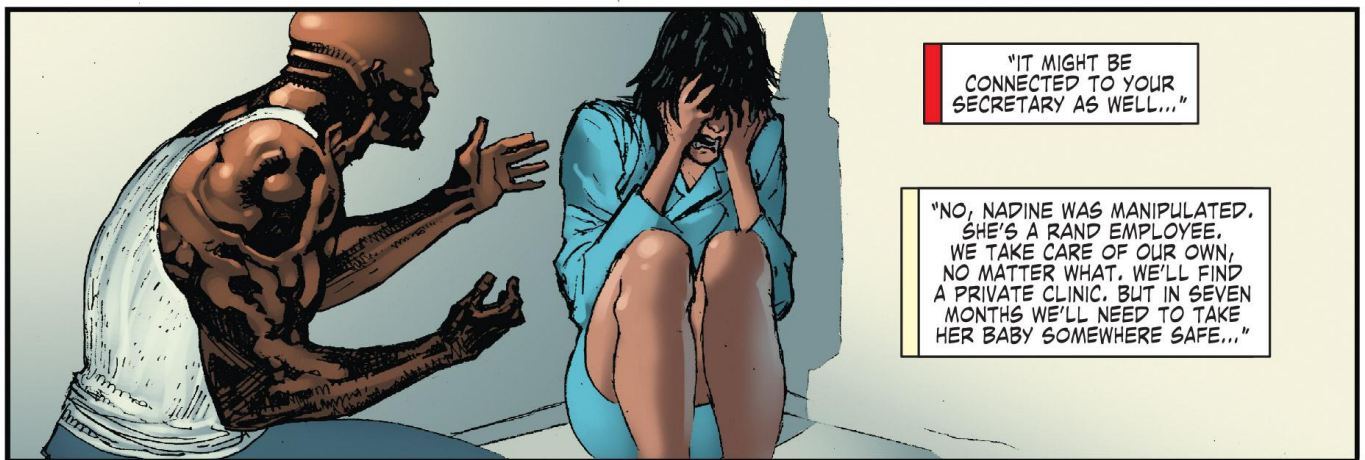


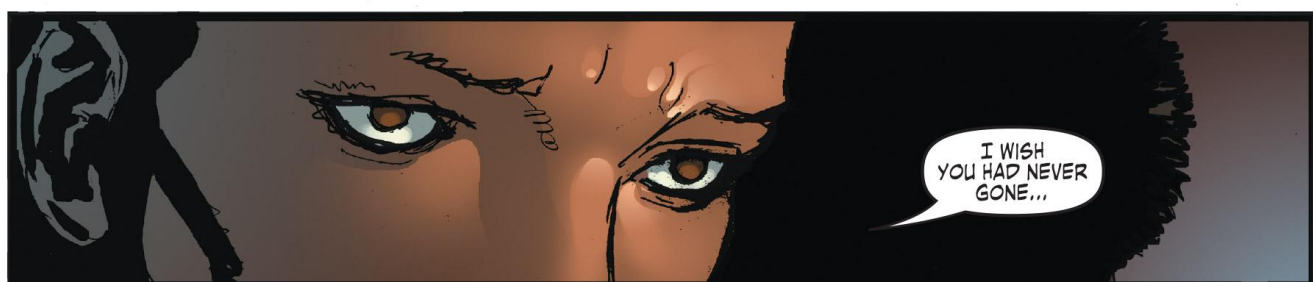
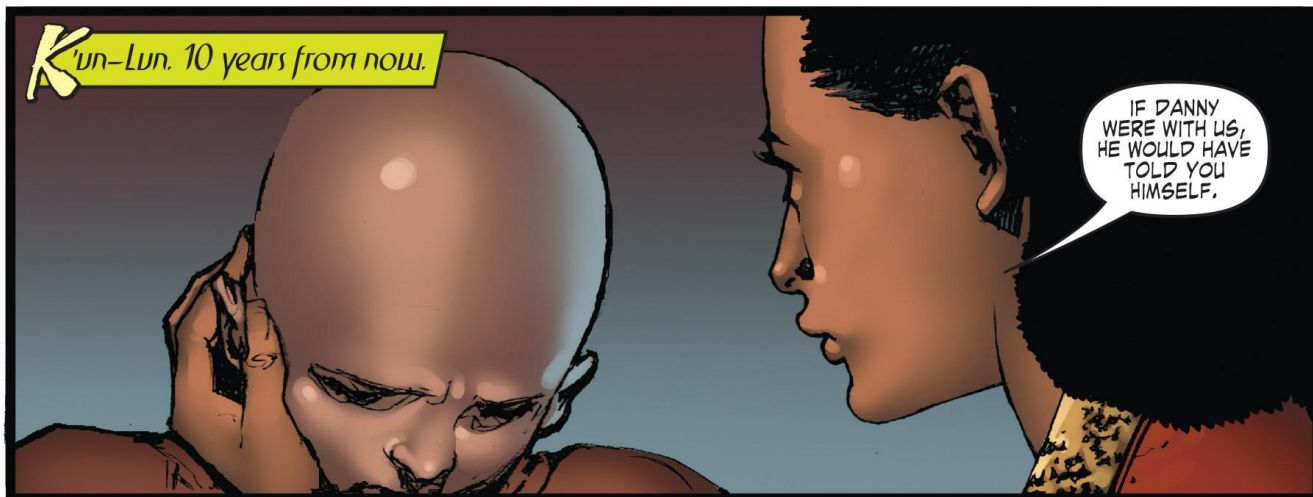
NOT NOW--
IT IS TOO
LATE NOW.

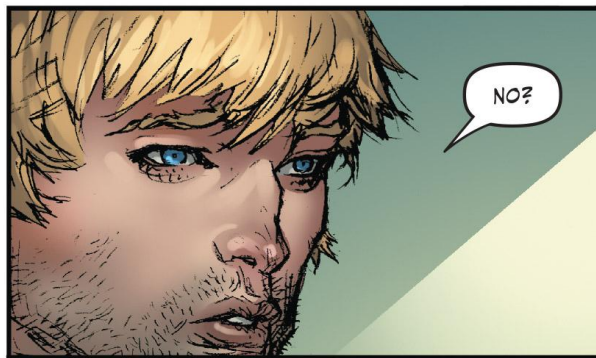
WHILE THE
DRAGON LIVES,
THE CH'I-LIN
STARVES.



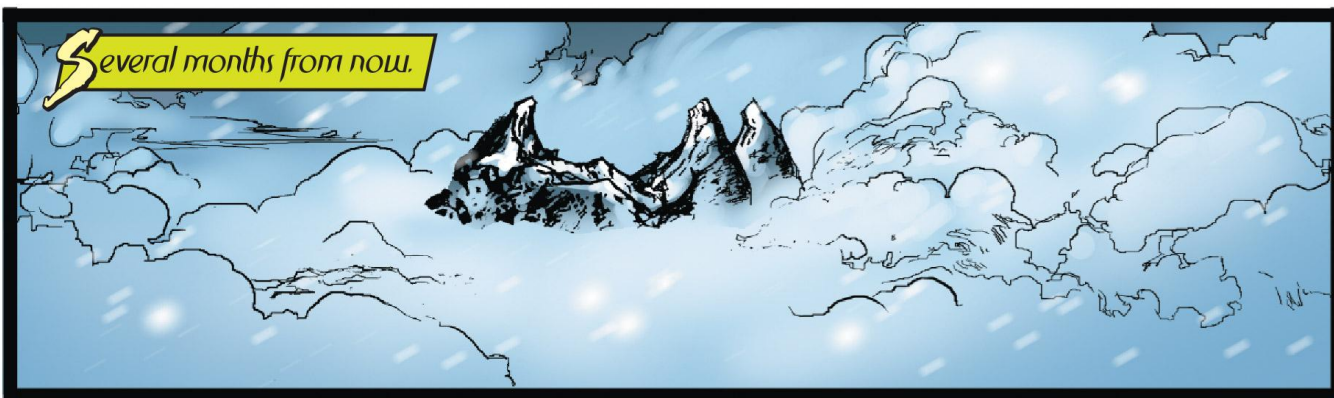
IT IS ONLY THE
UNHATCHED
EGG THAT CAN
FEED IT.







Several months from now.



The rumored Gates of the Eighth City.

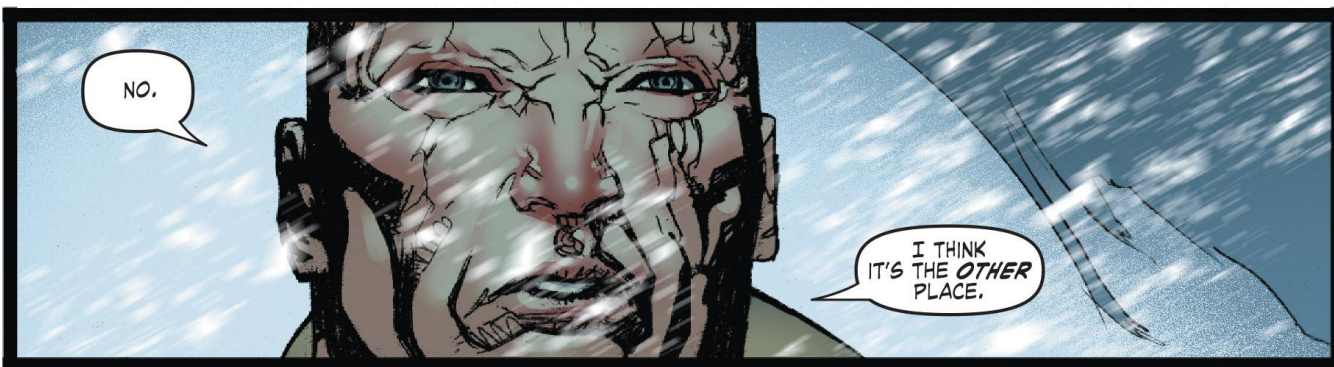


GOD IN
HEAVEN.



NO.

I THINK
IT'S THE *OTHER*
PLACE.



ORSON
RANDALL &
THE DEATH
QUEEN OF
CALIFORNIA



*I can still feel
her kiss.*

*Over the last several
decades, hundreds of
my wounds have healed.
Bruises faded. Bullet
holes, nearly erased.*

*But the sweet
burn of her lips...*

THE IMMORTAL IRON FIST:
ORSON RANDALL
and the **DEATH QUEEN**
of **CALIFORNIA**

*We met in Hollywood.
But the town didn't really
exist yet. Not the way
people know it today.*

*This was before all
of the Tinseltown
legends were born.*

*She could have been
among the first.*

*And I still
feel her kiss.*



Chapter One

Hollywood, California,
September 1928 A.D.

I was here at the urging
of an old war buddy,
George Sims, who I
hadn't seen since the
Battle of the Somme.

He had wandering
daughter trouble.

By now it's a familiar story--girl
leaves her suburban home, hightails
it to L.A., crazy celluloid dreams
fogging her good judgment.

But back then--especially
for a guy like George--it
was a new kind of nightmare.

Last letter home had her shacking
up with some older creep who
said he was a producer.

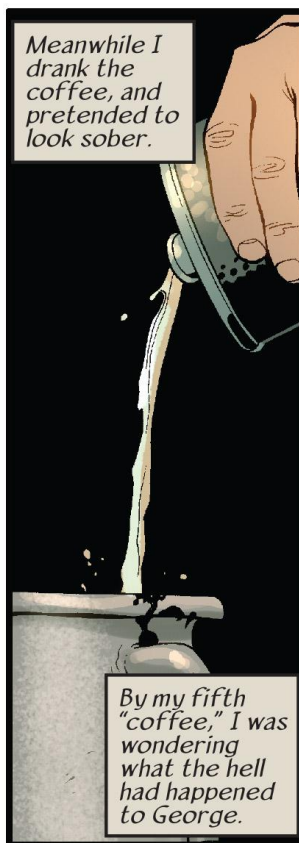
Four weeks passed.
Not a word.

George
panicked.

He asked me
to meet him
at Musso's on
Hollywood
Boulevard.
9 p.m. sharp.

WESTERN UNION
HOLLYWOOD CO.
Sep 4th/1928.
...HELD AGAINST HER WILL=
IF NOT TOO MUCH TROUBLE=
PLEASE COME TO CALIFORNIA=
WILL EXPLAIN EVERYTHING
WHEN I SEE YOU BUDDY=
9PM MUSSO GRILL=
IT WILL APPRECIATE YOUR PRESENCE FOR THE FUTURE (COURTESY THE MUSEUM)

I'd been sitting there for
two hours. No George.



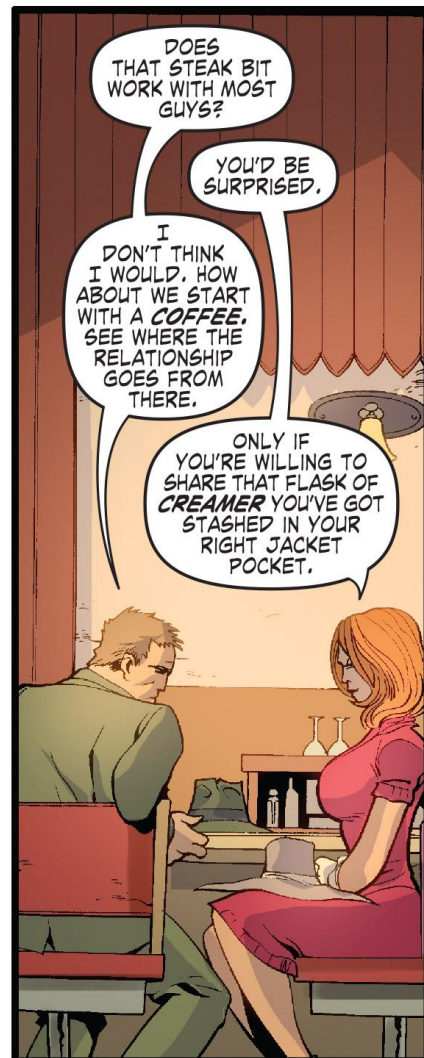


IT'S A LITTLE LATE FOR SOMETHING THAT HEAVY.

YOUR STOMACH WILL BE MAD AT YOU IN THE MORNING.



BUT I HAVE THIS *WICKED* CRAVING FOR RED MEAT.

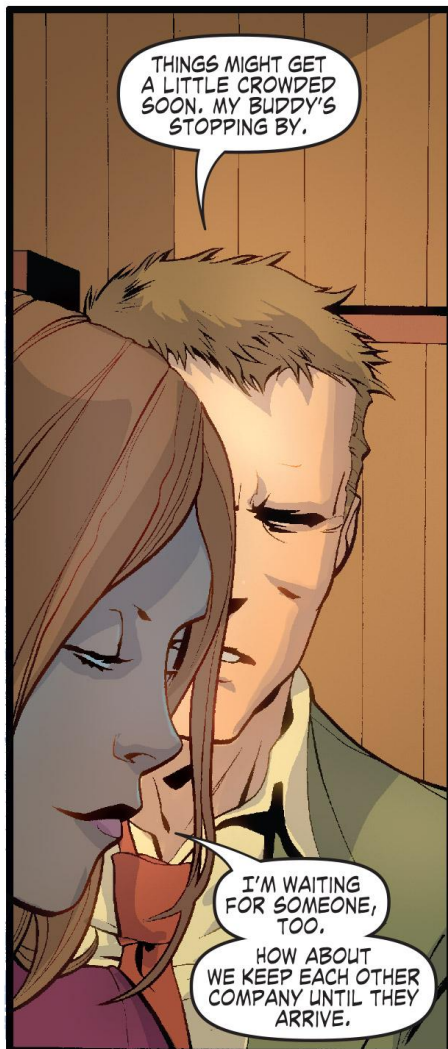


DOES THAT STEAK BIT WORK WITH MOST GUYS?

YOU'D BE SURPRISED.

I DON'T THINK I WOULD. HOW ABOUT WE START WITH A *COFFEE*. SEE WHERE THE RELATIONSHIP GOES FROM THERE.

ONLY IF YOU'RE WILLING TO SHARE THAT FLASK OF *CREAMER* YOU'VE GOT STASHED IN YOUR RIGHT JACKET POCKET.



THINGS MIGHT GET A LITTLE CROWDED SOON. MY BUDDY'S STOPPING BY.

I'M WAITING FOR SOMEONE, TOO.

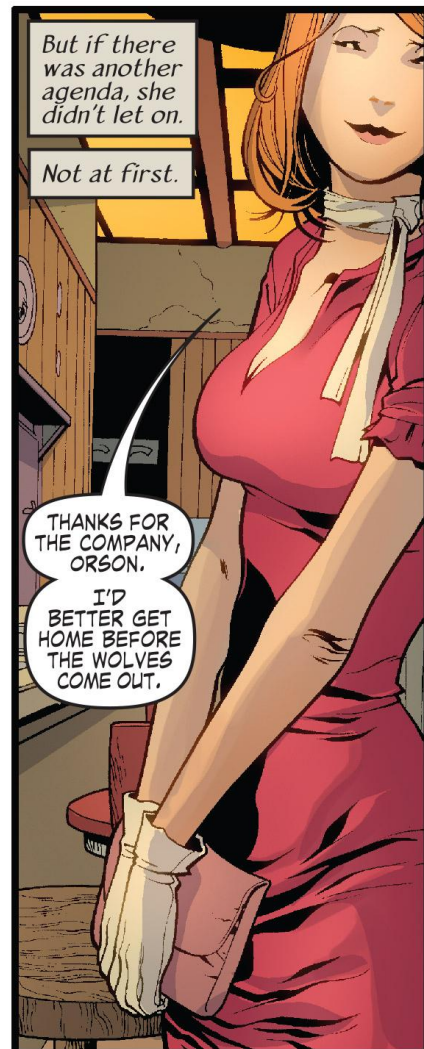
HOW ABOUT WE KEEP EACH OTHER COMPANY UNTIL THEY ARRIVE.



She told me her name was Galatea. I knew it was a little too random for a gal like her to choose the seat next to a guy like me.

There were plenty of single guys in this joint--guys with smoother skin and better prospects.

I'm an Immortal Weapon, but I'm no Clark Gable. Had to be something else.



But if there was another agenda, she didn't let on.

Not at first.

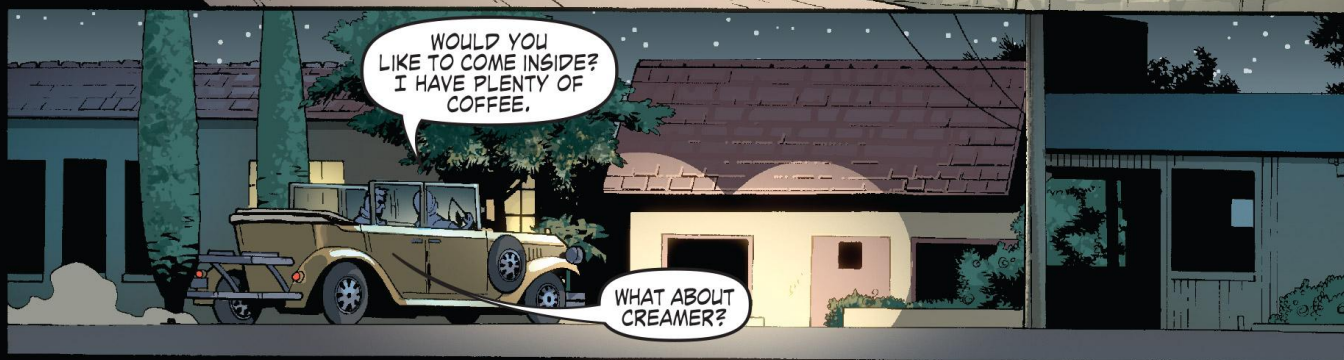
THANKS FOR THE COMPANY, ORSON.

I'D BETTER GET HOME BEFORE THE WOLVES COME OUT.

Of course I drove her home. I wouldn't want the wolves to get any ideas.



Musso's was closing anyway. I left a message with the bartender in case George turned up at the last minute.



She leaned in close, and I felt instantly drunk.

It wasn't the bourbon.



I've never felt anything like it.

It was like I wanted to shuck off my flesh and bones and dive into a great swirling big cosmic pool of *Galatea*.

And then I remembered George. And why I was here.

If I didn't have the years of discipline training in the mystical city of K'un-Lun...I believe I would have been inside that bungalow two seconds ago.

HOW ABOUT WE PICK THIS UP TOMORROW? TONIGHT'S NOT GOOD.

COFFEE GETS COLD FAST.

GALATEA, WAIT!

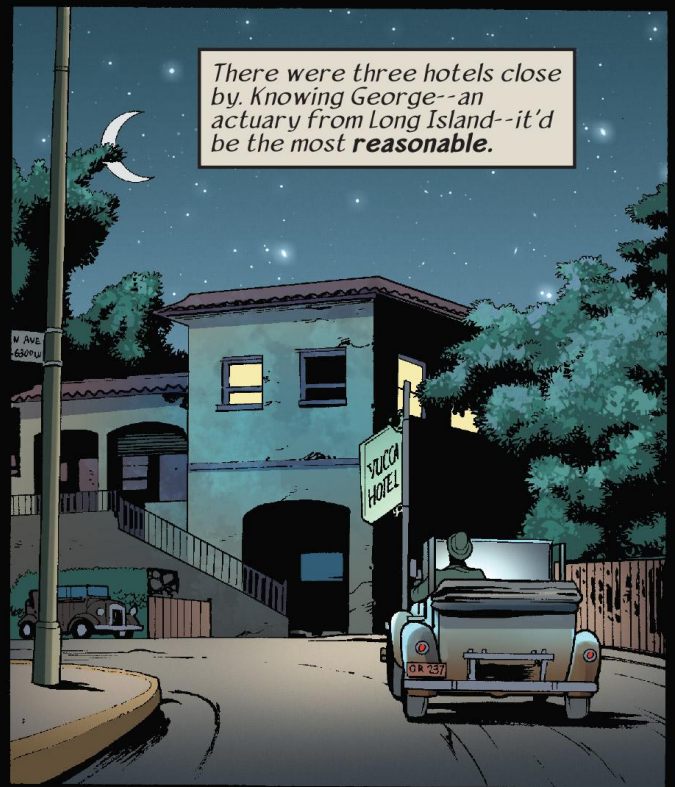
Dames.

Chapter Two



Long after closing, and still no sign of George.

I took another look at the telegram, and checked the address of the local dispatch office.



There were three hotels close by. Knowing George--an actuary from Long Island--it'd be the most **reasonable**.



I probably could have coaxed the room number out of the kid at the front desk with a wave of the hand.

But the kid looked tired and hungry.

I slid him a fin, and he seemed grateful for it.



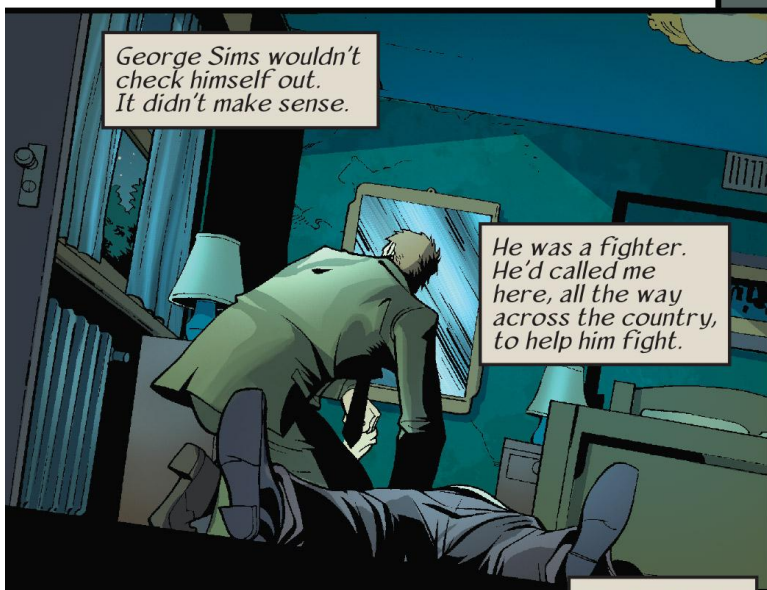
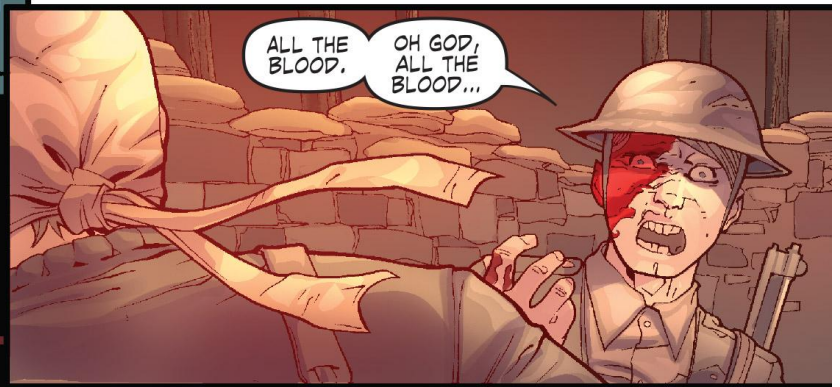
GEORGE?

KNOCK KNOCK

75



CREEEAK







*It never feels good,
fighting cops.*

*That includes L.A. cops, who
had a national rep for swift
and blinding brutality.*

*Word had it that the
year before, Al Capone
himself paid a visit.*

*He was looking for
a nice little West
Coast nest for
some imported
Canadian hooch.*



*A few hours after stepping off the train, Capone
was greeted by a welcome wagon--the chief of
detectives and a few of his toughest vice dicks.*



*Capone decided to
cut his vacation short.*



And he never came back.



What worried me was all of the instant manpower.

This wasn't two flatfoots following up on a tip.

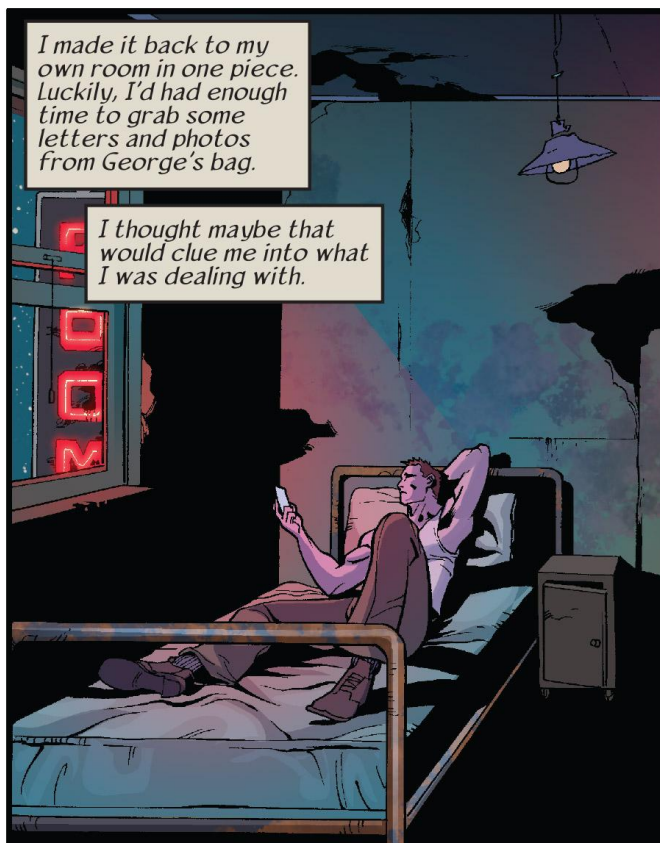
PING

PING



This was an execution squad.

And whatever Darlene Sims was mixed up in went to the highest levels.

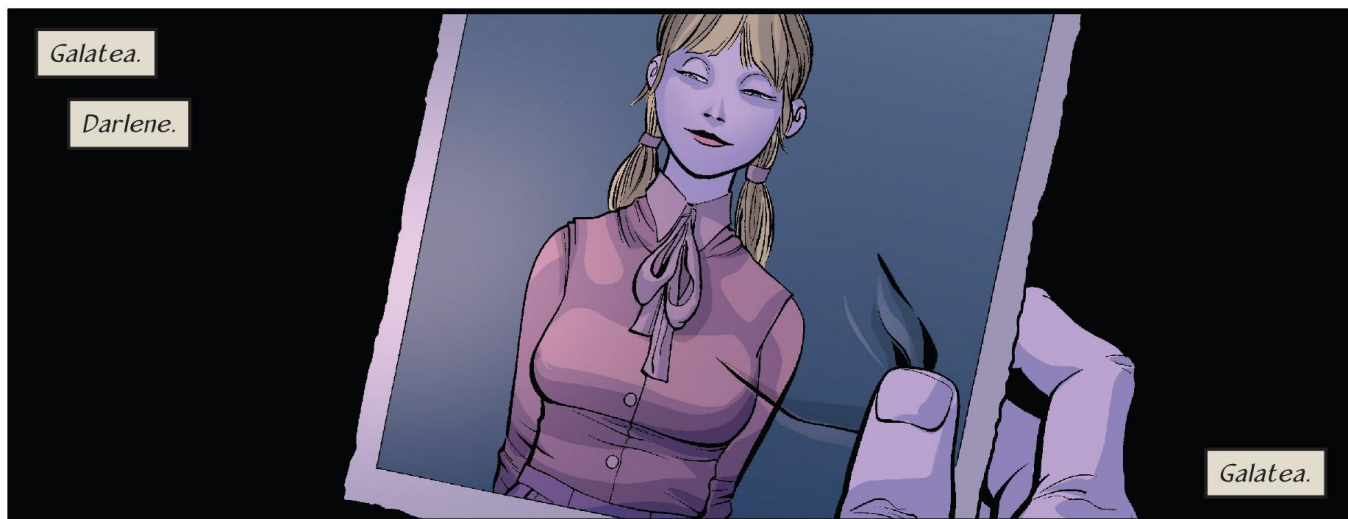


I made it back to my own room in one piece. Luckily, I'd had enough time to grab some letters and photos from George's bag.

I thought maybe that would clue me into what I was dealing with.



But I wasn't prepared for who'd be looking back at me.



Galatea.

Darlene.

Galatea.



I felt all woozy again, just looking at her beautiful face.

I literally had to remind myself: this is your **dead** friend's daughter.

That was below even me.



Wasn't it?

Chapter Three

One photo--sent home to George--featured Darlene and some stooge with his paws wrapped around her.

Back of the photo identified him as "Adam." A letter from Darlene revealed the guy's surname: Simon.

A few phone calls later, I learn Adam Simon was a producer at some joint called **Empress Pictures** over in Santa Monica.

Turns out, Simon's been bragging all over town about his next picture--**Black Honeymoon**--starring an up-and-coming starlet named...wait for it...Galatea.

It's Sunday morning.

The studio's closed. Everybody in their right mind is probably home, sleeping off the hangovers they earned up in Studio City or down in Tijuana.

I had a hangover, too.

But not from the booze.

KRAK

I couldn't stop thinking about *her*.



I found two things of interest in Simon's office.

A huge jar of pistachio nuts.

And a file full of headshots.



Apparently, Simon had a very specific type.



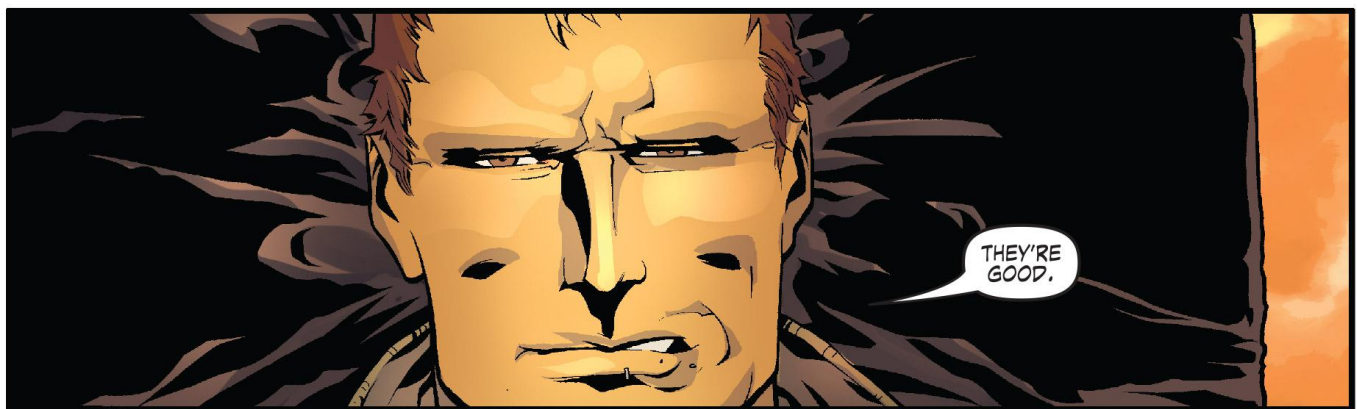
Women who looked like Galatea/Darlene Sims.

Not perfect copies or clones or any of that nonsense. But the features were close enough to make you wonder.

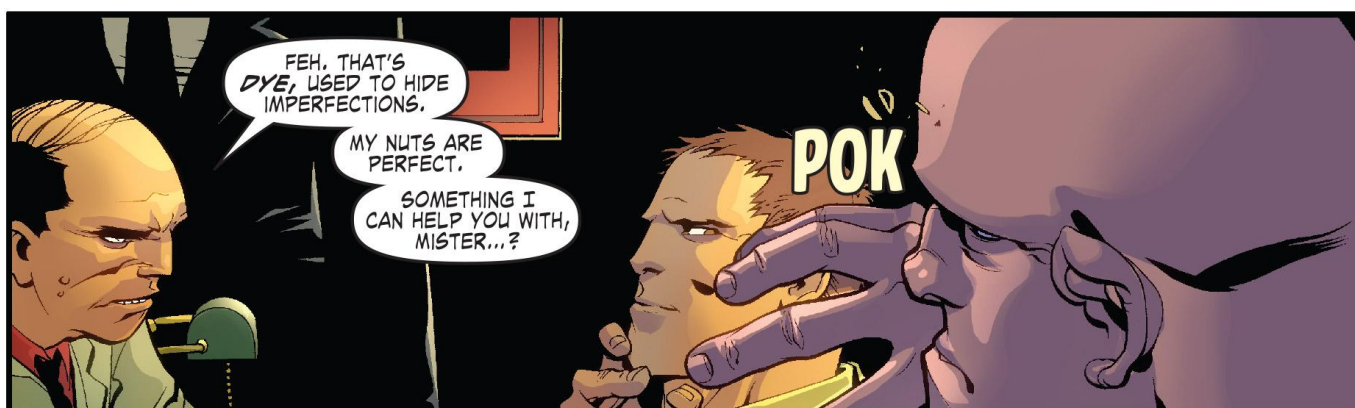


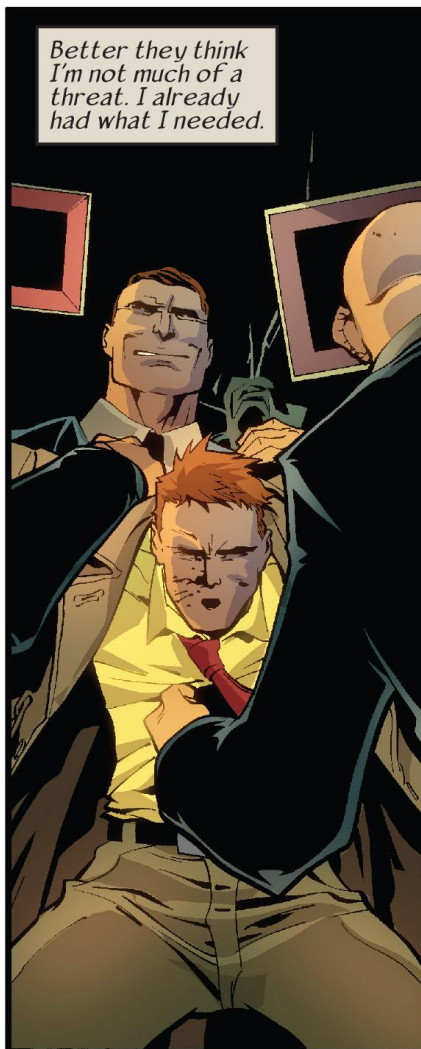
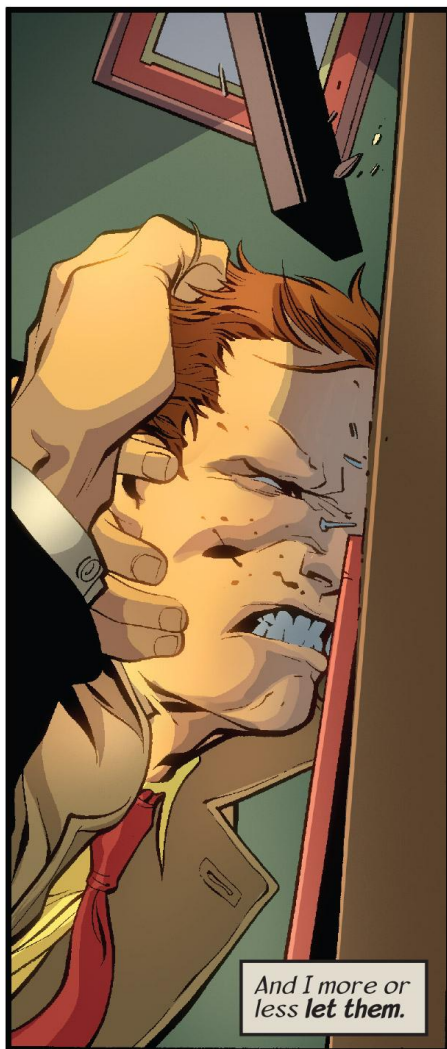
I wouldn't have to wonder for long.

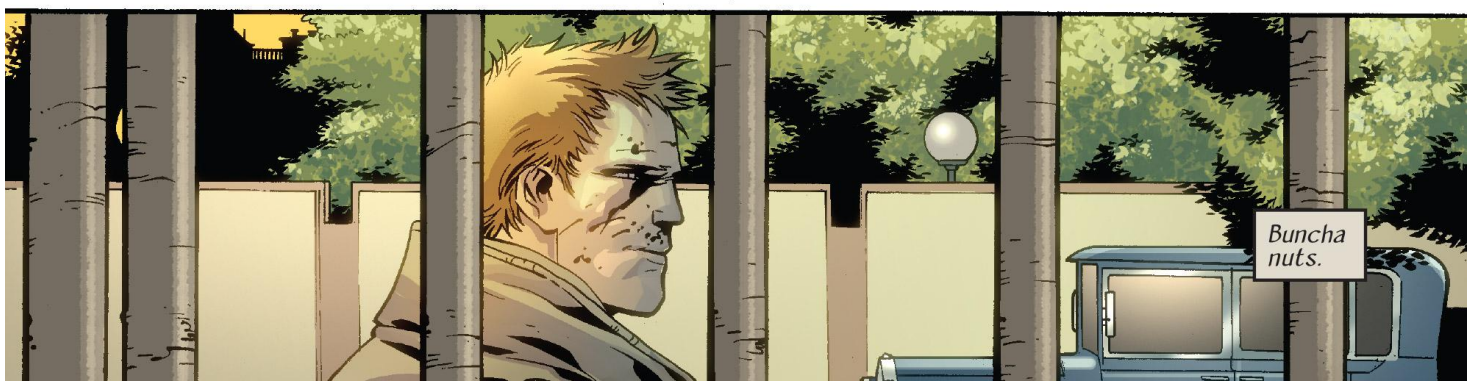
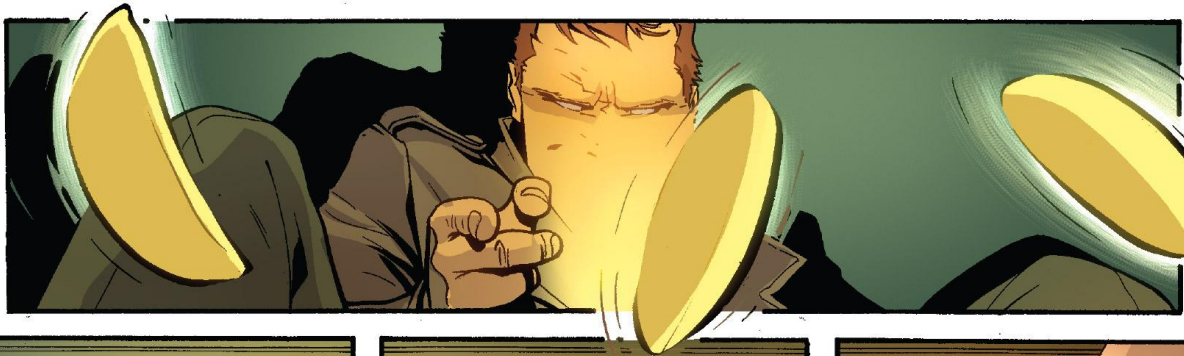
THOSE ARE MY NUTS.



THEY'RE GOOD.







Chapter Four

Belden Drive. The Hollywood Hills.

When I saw the place the night before, I didn't give it much thought.

Just another Hollywood bungalow.

And like everything else in this town, appearances were deceiving.

Everything was locked up tight. Made me wonder how Galatea/Darlene broke out the night before.

But that's not what made me hesitate.

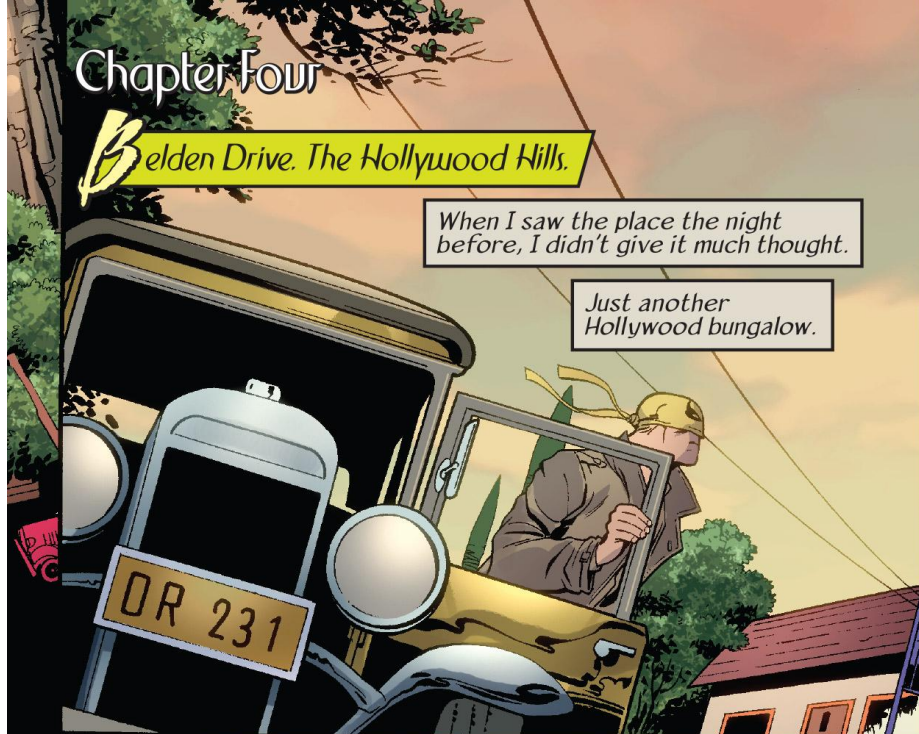
It was those crazy ideas again, which flooded my brain like morphine the further I made my way inside.

Ideas about me and Galatea.

Darlene.

Galatea.

That was before I realized it was a prison for up-and-coming starlets.



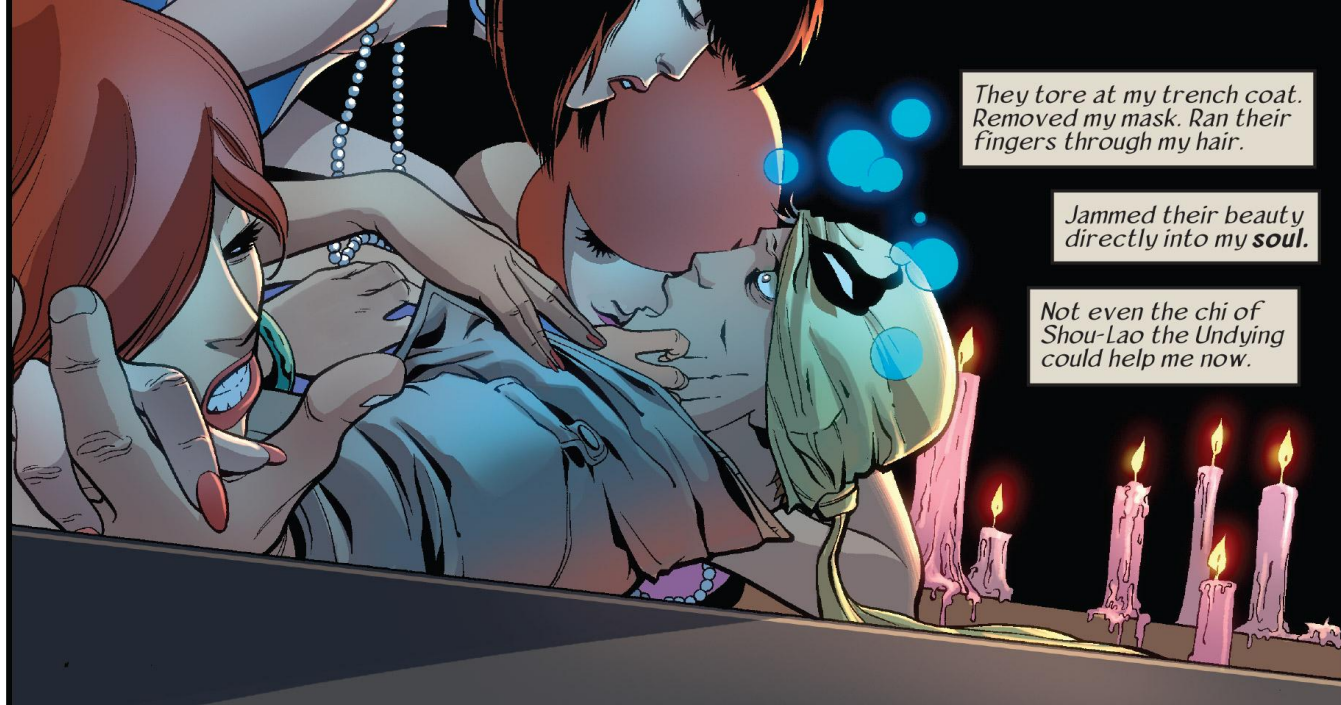
My plan was simple: Get Darlene. Get out of California. Get Darlene home to her mother.

Then *forget* about Darlene.



I AM GALATEA.

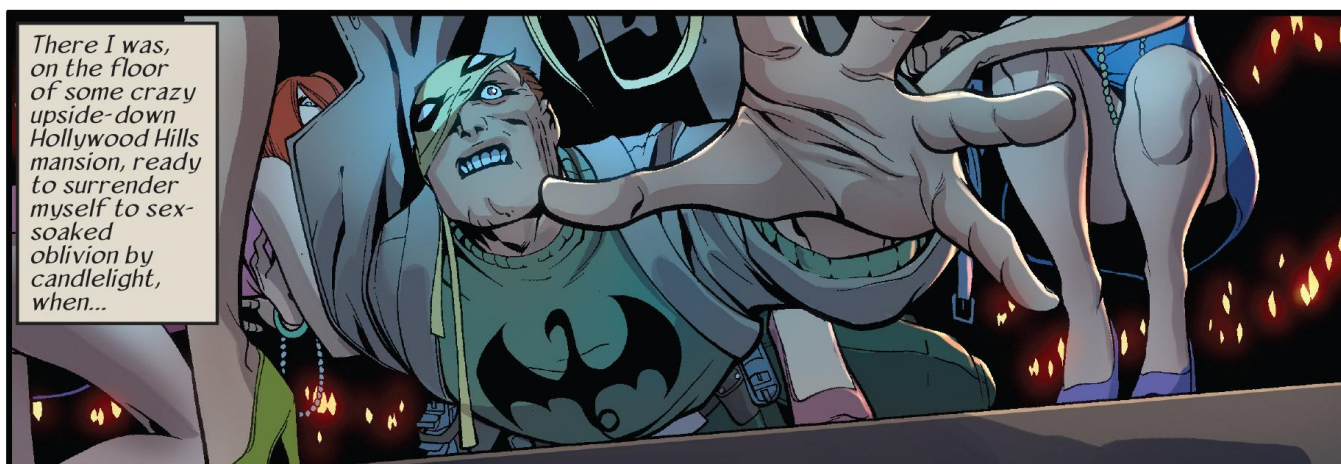




They tore at my trench coat.
Removed my mask. Ran their
fingers through my hair.

Jammed their beauty
directly into my *soul*.

Not even the chi of
Shou-Lao the Undying
could help me now.



There I was,
on the floor
of some crazy
upside-down
Hollywood Hills
mansion, ready
to surrender
myself to sex-
soaked
oblivion by
candlelight,
when...



...out of the
darkness...



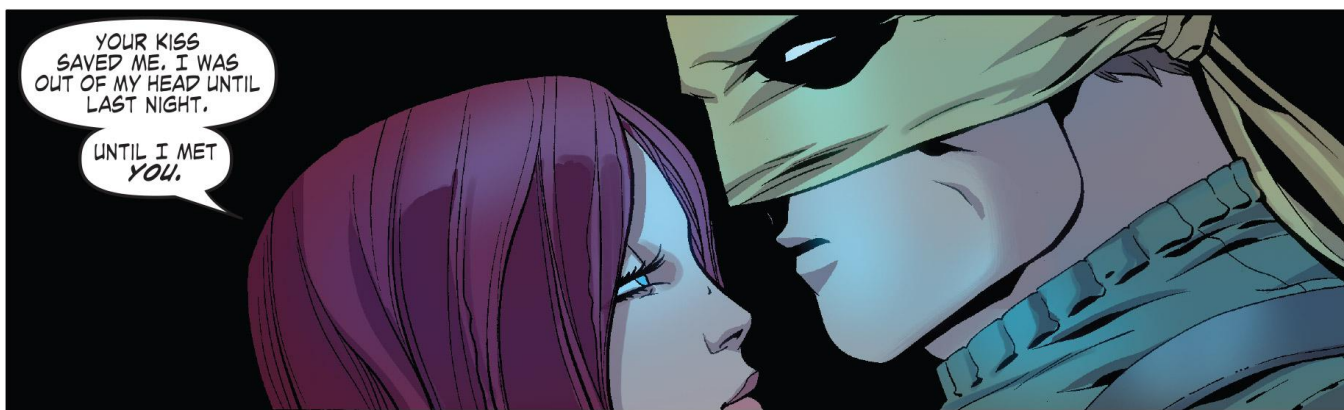
...my *angel*
appeared.

COME
WITH ME, ORSON!
QUICKLY!



I'd never felt this weak before.

Not even after going a few rounds with those damned Lightning Lords in Nepal.



YOUR KISS SAVED ME. I WAS OUT OF MY HEAD UNTIL LAST NIGHT.

UNTIL I MET YOU.



C'MON. WE CAN TALK LA--



GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, MR. RANDALL.



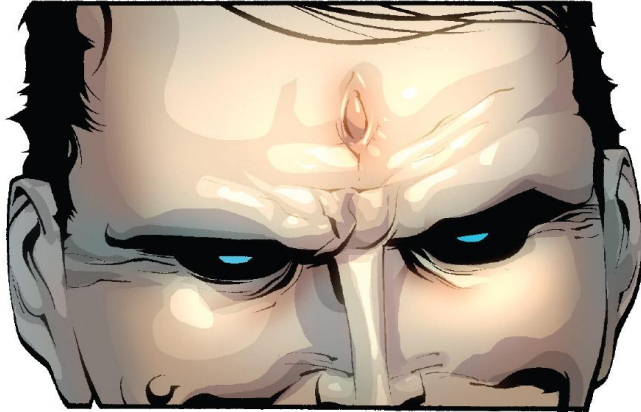
I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF EMPRESS PICTURES.



Chapter Five



THE
TALKIES ARE HERE,
MR. RANDALL.



WITHIN A FEW
YEARS, MOVING PICTURES
WITH **SYNCHRONIZED
SOUND** WILL DOMINATE
THE INDUSTRY.

WHAT BETTER WAY
TO BRING THE VOICE OF
OUR DEATH QUEEN TO THE
MASSES THAN A MARRIAGE
OF HER HOLY VOICE
AND IMAGE?

IT WAS
FORETOLD IN
THE TEACHINGS OF
HIS EXALTED
BABA FU.



BABA
WHO?

DON'T PLAY COY,
MR. RANDALL. I MADE
A FEW PHONE CALLS
THIS AFTERNOON. I KNOW
YOU'RE NO STRANGER TO
THE MYSTIC ARTS.

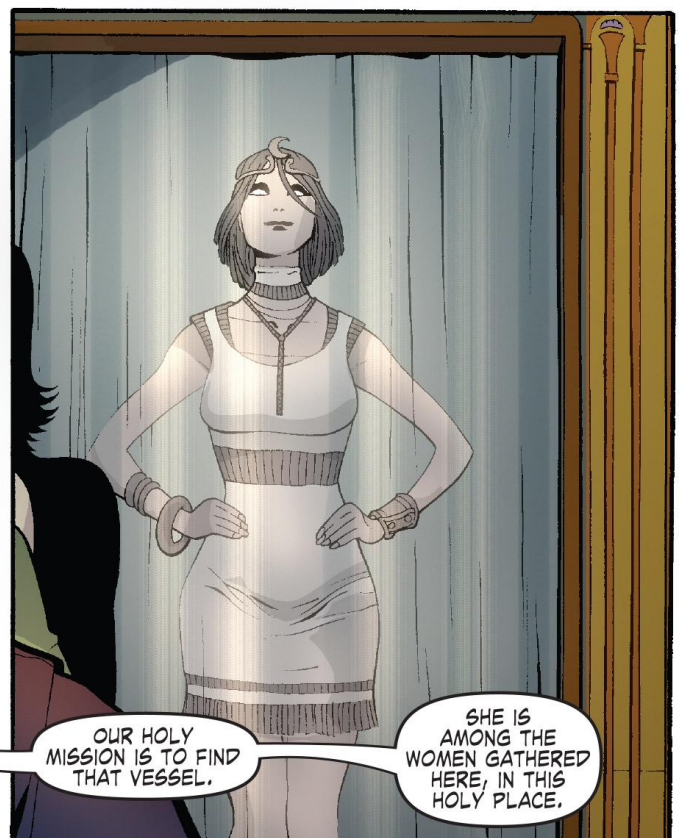
DIDN'T WANT
TO BRAG.

Yeah, I'd heard of Baba
Fu. Third-rate Chinese
demi-god, forever
gettin' all misty-eyed
over his dead mortal
wife. Wah wah.



BABA FU'S
PASSION IS A MIGHTY
FORCE BEYOND HUMAN
COMPREHENSION.

AND NOW HIS
EXALTED ONE DEMANDS
AN EARTHLY VESSEL FOR HIS
WIFE, WHO IS PROPHESED TO BE
THE DEATH QUEEN OF THE WEST,
RULING THE HEARTS OF ALL MEN,
AND CRUMBLING NATIONS
WITH A KISS.



OUR HOLY
MISSION IS TO FIND
THAT VESSEL.

SHE IS
AMONG THE
WOMEN GATHERED
HERE, IN THIS
HOLY PLACE.



I GET IT. YOU PLACE WANT ADS IN THE PAPER, AND LURE INNOCENT WOMEN HERE. FILL THEIR HEADS WITH THIS CRAZY TALK.

NO LURING, MR. RANDALL. THEY COME OF THEIR OWN FREE WILL. WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THAT, WELL... THAT'S UP TO BABA FU.

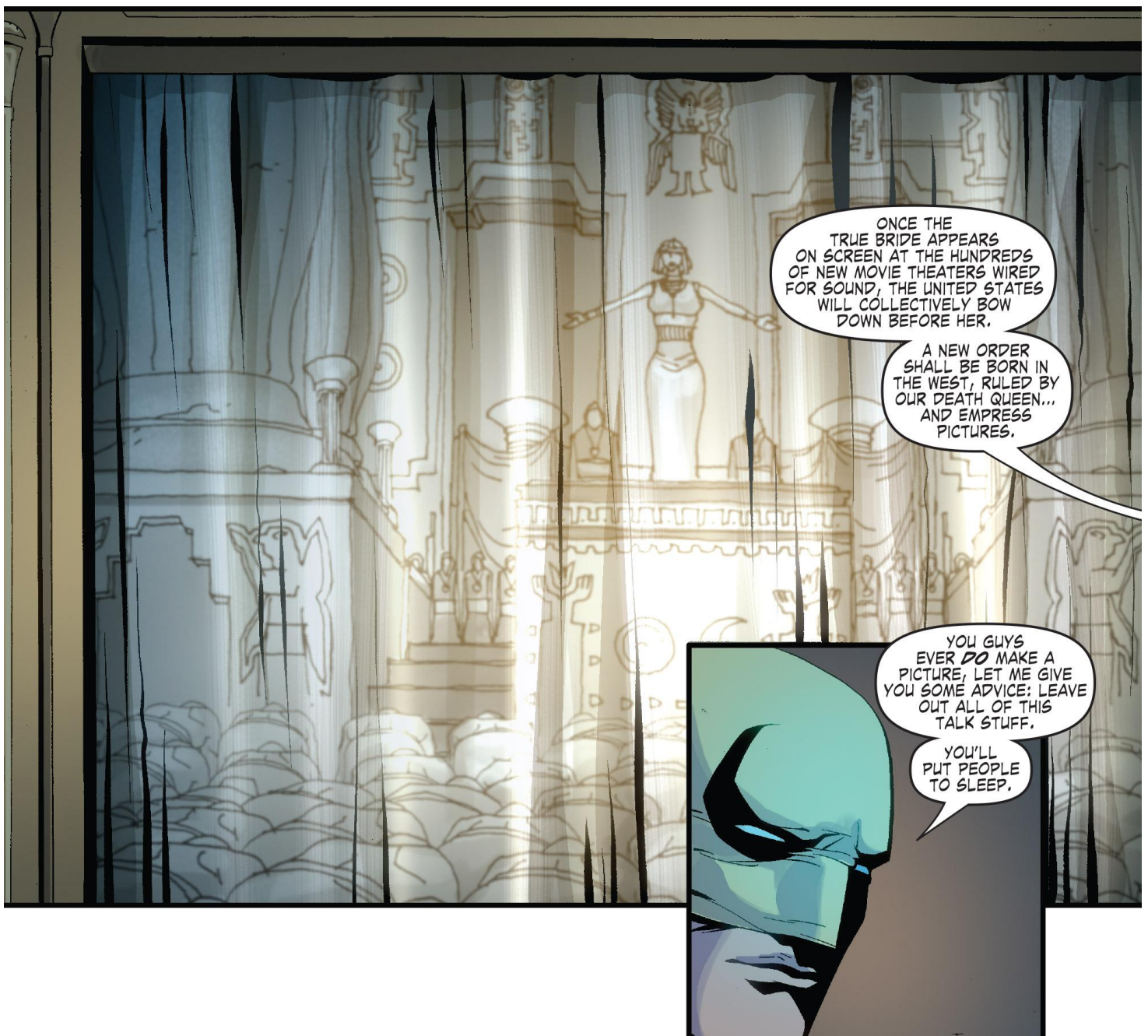
ONLY THE MOST WORTHY WILL BECOME HOST TO THE BRIDE OF BABA FU, AND ENJOY LIMITLESS EARTHLY POWER.

YOU'VE HAD A MERE TASTE OF BABA FU'S INTOXICATING ABILITIES--IT FLOWS THROUGH ALL OF THE GIRLS HERE. JUST IMAGINE WHEN THE DEATH QUEEN HERSELF RETURNS!



Empress wasn't just a motion-picture studio.

It was a damned mystical cult.



ONCE THE TRUE BRIDE APPEARS ON SCREEN AT THE HUNDREDS OF NEW MOVIE THEATERS WIRED FOR SOUND, THE UNITED STATES WILL COLLECTIVELY BOW DOWN BEFORE HER.

A NEW ORDER SHALL BE BORN IN THE WEST, RULED BY OUR DEATH QUEEN... AND EMPRESS PICTURES.

YOU GUYS EVER *DO* MAKE A PICTURE, LET ME GIVE YOU SOME ADVICE: LEAVE OUT ALL OF THIS TALK STUFF.

YOU'LL PUT PEOPLE TO SLEEP.





You don't know
the effort it
took to duck
their blows.



FUH!

And soon, I wasn't
able to duck
anything at all.



I'd never
felt weaker.

UHN!



But there's
one thing
they forgot.



It doesn't take
much strength
to pull a trigger.

It was slow
going at first.

But the more I kept
shooting, the more my
strength returned.

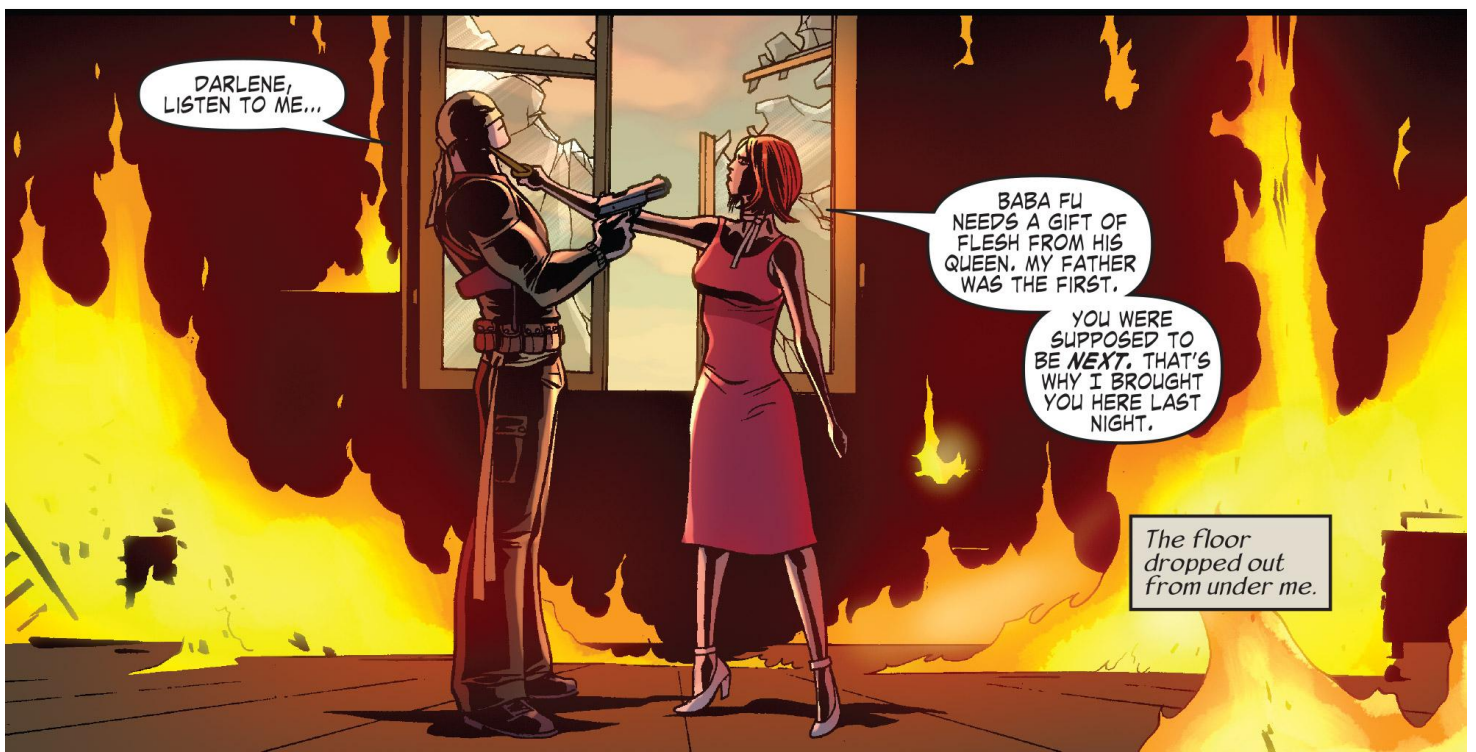
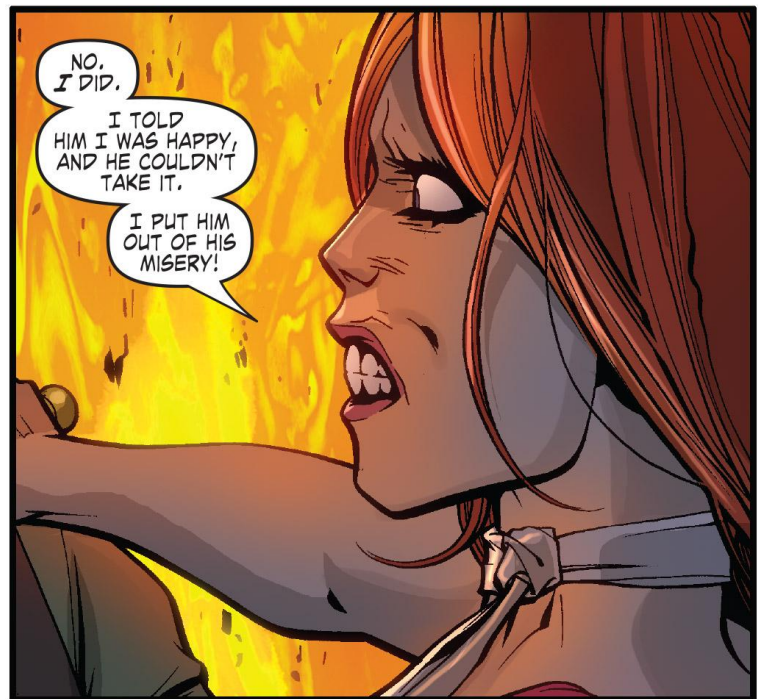
The dragon's chi cleared my
head like an otherworldly
bromo after a bender.

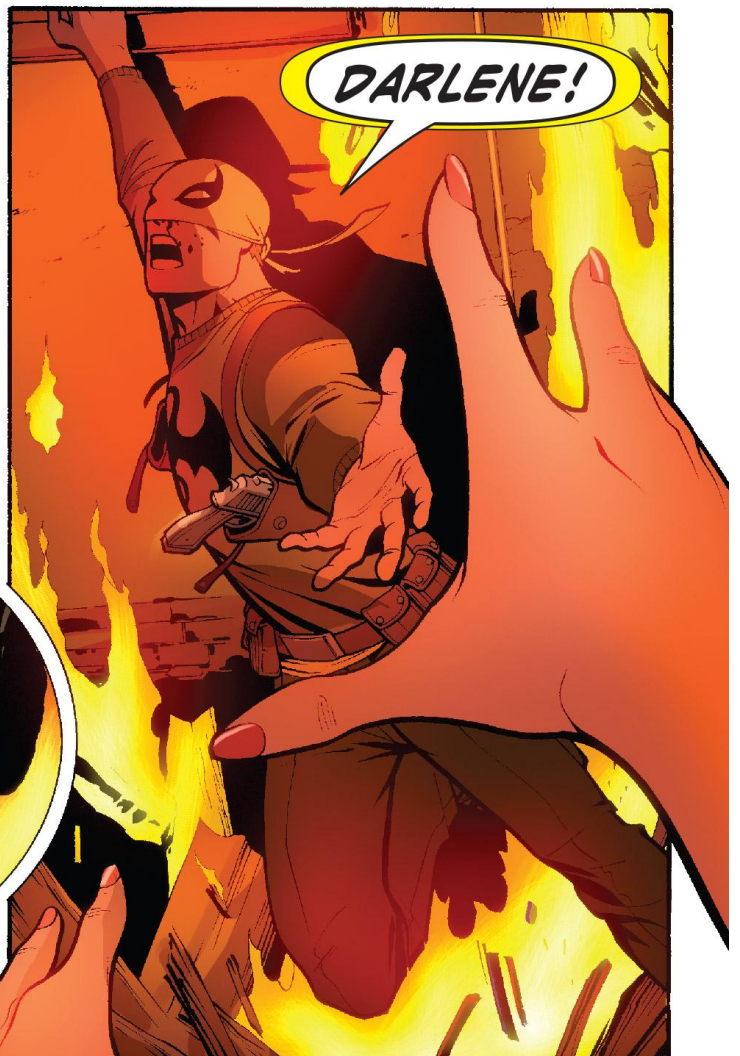
The power ran
down my
fingers, into
the guns,
into the very bullets
themselves...

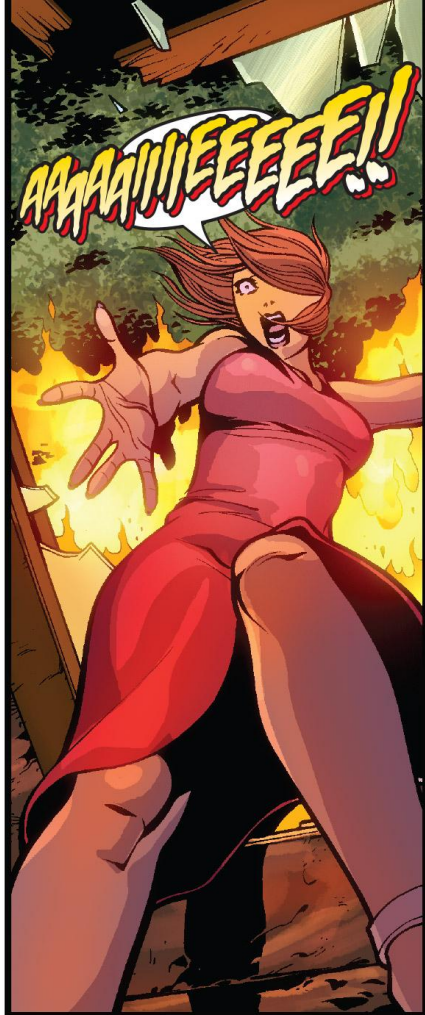
...and into
some celluloid.

Which, I
learned, is
ridiculously
flammable.









I could hear her
down in the inferno.



By the time I
got down
there, though,
the screaming
had stopped.



But there were other
women screaming, too...

Somewhere
in the fire.



Epilogue

Empress Pictures folded quickly, and became a sub-footnote in Hollywood history. The existing footage of **Black Honeymoon** was destroyed in the blaze.

Another failed piece of the dream.

Most of the Baba Fu-cultist producers died in the fire, too. But not all of them. Some went on to have active Tinseltown careers...

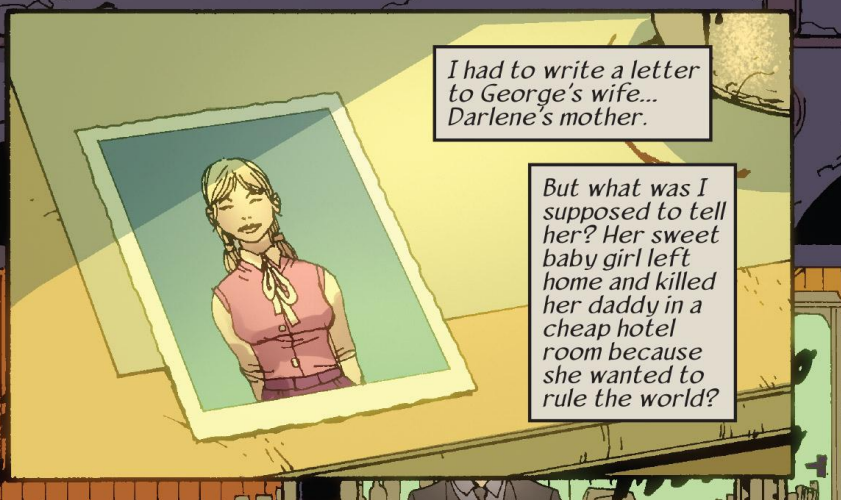
...producing the biggest silver-screen stinkeroos known to man.



Yeah, that one you're guessing.

Uh-huh.
That one, too.

I didn't get off scot-free, either.

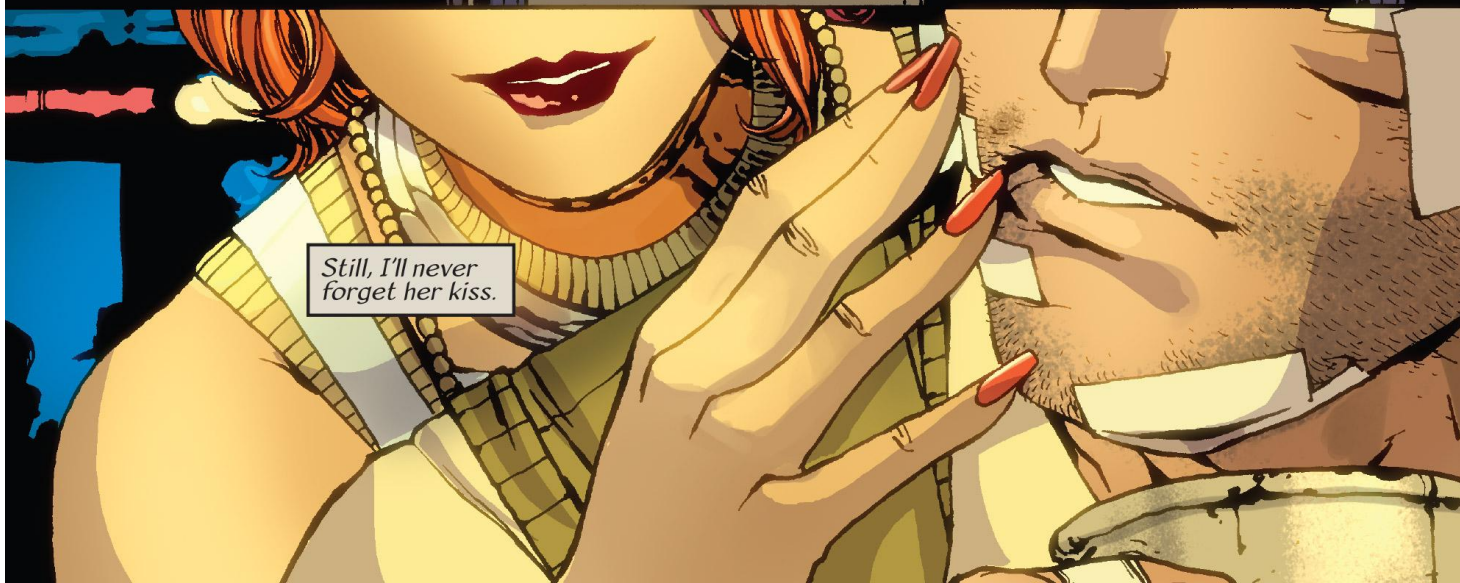


I had to write a letter to George's wife... Darlene's mother.

But what was I supposed to tell her? Her sweet baby girl left home and killed her daddy in a cheap hotel room because she wanted to rule the world?



Some people don't want to be talked out of their dreams, no matter how crazy.



Still, I'll never forget her kiss.

Or the others,
who kissed just
like her.

MORE
COFFEE,
ORSON?

PUT ON
YOUR MASK AGAIN.
PLEEEEEAAAAASE!!!



I couldn't
save Darlene.
And as it
turns out, I
couldn't even
save myself.

The other Galateas--
grateful to be free of
the house of Baba Fu--
wouldn't leave my side.
Not for a minute.

I spent almost a full
year in California,
drowning in their unholy
and unrelenting passion.
A year of lips and
caresses and hot breath
on the back of my neck.

Losing myself in them.

Even though I
wanted to scream.

Me, just another sap
who came to
Hollywood and barely
made it out alive.

HOLLYWOODLAND

鐵
17

VARIANT BY
DAVID AJA

THE
IMMORTAL
IRON
FIST

"...one of the great strengths of *Immortal Iron Fist* is the terrific supporting cast...a solid script and characterizations that fall right in line with past arcs..."

— Jesse Schedeen, *IGN.com*

Although the legend of the Iron Fist may be immortal, Danny Rand most certainly is not!

Noted crime novelist Duane Swierczynski continues the epic tale begun by Ed Brubaker and Matt Fraction that comic fans in the know can't stop raving about — with art by Travel Foreman (*Ares*) and industry legend Russ Heath (*Sgt. Rock*).



MARVEL

T+

Collecting *Immortal Iron Fist* #17-20 and *Immortal Iron Fist: Orson Randall and the Death Queen of California*.